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A BILLION DOLLARS for the navy—that is Economy Calvin's opening demand of the new Congress. Four new battleships, at $60,000,000; 26 cruisers of the 10,000-ton type, at $15,000,000 each; 3 airplane carriers, 5 fleet submarines, and 18 destroyer leaders—this is the Administration's five-year program. It is larger than the 1916 naval program—the largest in United States history. A billion dollars is a round figure; higher prices are likely to make the cost still greater. And this in the year of peace 1927, six years after the Washington Disarmament Conference, two years after Mr. Coolidge's Omaha speech declaring that "it is our purpose in our intercourse with foreign Powers to rely not upon the strength of our fleets and our armies," one year after we sent our representatives to Geneva to persuade Europe to disarm. Certainly nothing could be wilder, stupider, better calculated to persuade the world that the United States is headed for a rampage, and to stimulate the atmosphere of fear and suspicion that makes for war. We do not believe the American people have any desire for such a program of militaristic expansion, and we call upon them—individuals, women's clubs and men's clubs, churches, civic organizations—to overwhelm their representatives in Washington with an avalanche of protest.

BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN are the 128,770 British subjects who have signed Arthur Ponsonby's "peace letter," declaring that

> We, the undersigned, convinced that disputes between nations are capable of settlement either by diplomatic negotiations or some other form of international arbitrage, hereby solemnly declare that we will refuse to support or render war service to any government which resorts to arms.

Doubtless the signers will be denounced as traitors for resolving that they will act on Benjamin Franklin's discovery that "there never was a good war or a bad peace." But they are ambassadors of the future; and a future perhaps not so remote as we tend to believe. It may not be many decades before war will seem to all as silly a fashion of settling international disputes as the medieval system of testing a witness's honesty by asking him to walk through fire. Then the conscientious objectors will be as respected and forgotten as the early Christian martyrs are today.

DWIGHT MORROW'S HAM-AND-EGG DIPLOMACY must be startling to some of the brethren in official circles, but it seems to work. This product of J. P. Morgan and Company began his post-graduate course in international relations by warning the American expatriates in Mexico City that they were guests of Mexico; he continued by traveling with the President of Mexico and sharing with him the most widely advertised ham-and-egg breakfast in history. His next adventure in friendship was to invite the inimitable Will Rogers to fool his way south of the border; and now he has persuaded Lindbergh to undertake a good-will flight across the arid mountains where Pershing once sought Villa—a new kind of Mexican expedition for a colonel of the United States army. Mr. Morrow seems to be in a fair way to make the United States popular in Mexico and Mexico popular in the United States—a work of genius after a decade of blunderbussing. If he concludes by persuading American firms to accept Mexican laws, and Mexican officials to trust American business men, he may start a movement to reform the State Department by turning it over to the bankers. Unfortunately, we fear, Dwight Morrows are as rare in Wall Street as in the diplomatic service.

GOVERNOR FULLER of Massachusetts has just returned from a little trip to London and Paris where, he said, he found no evidence of dissatisfaction with Americans over the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti. Whether or not this was due to the fact that Mr. Fuller traveled under the name of Peter Bond we do not say, but the fact stamps him as a coward of a kind new in our political life. If he escaped from the Sacco and Vanzetti case while he was abroad, it met him almost at the dock on his return in the form of the annual report of the Massachusetts Judicial Council, filed for the Governor's inspection. In the report the council recommends no less soul-shaking a change than a revision of the Massachusetts appeal system to make it correspond with the methods of appeals in New York State. Thus, if the recommendations are followed the Massachusetts Supreme Court will in due time have the power

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of reviewing in full the acts of a trial judge, including decisions on motions for a new trial on the ground of insufficient or newly discovered evidence. Thus, in short, a repetition of the Sacco-Vanzetti tragedy need never happen. This, of course, is locking the stable door after the horse has been stolen. Massachusetts justice can never catch up with Sacco and Vanzetti; but those well-wishers of the world, now dead, would be the first to welcome any change that might be of benefit to the people of Massachusetts.

OKLAHOMA IS INDULGING in another of her periodic civil wars. Her temperamental governor, H. S. Johnston [see Mr. Blake's Oklahoma Goes Rosicrucian in *The Nation* for September 14], refused to call the legislature into special session in order that it might impeach him, and a majority of the legislature decided that it had an inherent right to convene, and met. Its deliberations were, as was expected, displeasing to the Governor, and he called out the National Guard to keep it out of the State Capitol. Inevitably this little war is obscuring the issues which began the conflict—Governor Johnston's personal government through his transcendental, star-reading secretary, and the curious legal tangle of the Owens case. O. O. Owens, a member of the legislature, criticized the Supreme Court of the State in an oil case in which he was the defendant. The judges brought personal damage suits against him and he was sentenced to serve a year in jail—although under Oklahoma law contempt is a misdemeanor carrying a maximum penalty of thirty days. Owens applied to the Criminal Court of Appeals for a writ of habeas corpus, and it issued one, but the Supreme Court hastily got out a writ of prohibition against the Criminal Court and cited one of its judges for contempt. The sheriff, served with conflicting papers from the two courts, refused to release Owens. The Governor sided with the State Supreme Court, but the federal Circuit Court of Appeals took jurisdiction and upheld the Criminal Court. The next act of this curious Supreme Court was to declare in an obiter dictum that the legislature was without inherent or implied power to convene upon its own motion. All of which leads one to conclude that the gloomy gentlemen who have pronounced funeral orations over "the last frontier" should buy tickets for Oklahoma City.

ONE OF THE MOMENTOUS DECISIONS of 1927 is the unanimous verdict of a special court of three federal judges in the St. Louis and O'Fallon Railroad case, upholding in effect the Interstate Commerce Commission's valuation of the railroad on the basis of 1914 prices. Although this particular case involves only $226,880, it has been called "the biggest lawsuit in history" because it is regarded as a test to determine whether the final valuation of the nation's railroads will be what the railroads want it to be—about $33,000,000,000—or the $23,000,000,000 set by the Interstate Commerce Commission—and accordingly what amount of excess earnings (one half of earnings above 6 per cent) the Government may recapture. The suit arises because of the ambiguous phrasing of the Railway Valuation Act of 1913. This instructed the commission to find the value of the railroads but did not define "value" or designate any means of determining it. Subsequently the commission put a constructive interpretation upon this instruction and based its calculation on a prudent-investment theory embodying the level of 1914 prices as a yardstick. The railroads have contended that their valuation should be based upon the cost of reproduction today which would give them approximately $10,000,000,000 above the commission's figure and enable them to collect at least $500,000,000 additional annual revenue. While the controlling opinion, written by Circuit Judge Kimbrough Stone, does not discuss the methods of valuation, District Judge C. B. Faris, in a concurring opinion, approved the valuation methods of the commission, stating that "it reached the valuation found by it in the only possible way in a situation as difficult as that." The case will be appealed to the Supreme Court, but the unanimous verdict of the lower court is impressive.

POLAND AND LITHUANIA, in the persons of their premiers, Pilsudski and Waldemaras, jointly declared before the Council of the League of Nations that they both wanted peace, and the declaration was hailed with a curious outburst of applause as a great moral victory for the League of Nations. The trouble is that they both also want Vilna; and Vilna, as Miss Spence's record, printed in our International Relations Section this week, shows, is the cause of all the talk of war. It is because Poland has Vilna, Lithuania's capital, that the technical state of war has persisted these seven years, and Pilsudski's histrionic triumph in demanding of Waldemaras whether he wanted peace or war does not change the Polish administration of the city or the Lithuanian desire for it. Little Lithuania of course cannot fight against overgrown Poland; the threat of open war has come from Poland's ambition to annex even more than Vilna, just as the technical state of war has persisted because of the Polish grab in 1920. It is a crime to legalize such outright acts of theft; and a double crime to conceal the continuing wrong done to Lithuania by loudly shouting "Peace!" The Vilna question will not be settled until it is settled right.

THE NEW YORK *TIMES* did a handsome thing when it printed on its first page a dispatch, headed Revolt in Ukraine Was Exaggerated, correcting the sensational but false story to which we referred last week. The *Times* correspondent in Rumania, Navarre Atkinson, still thinks that he and the Rumanians know more of what is happening in the Ukraine than do Associated Press and other correspondents who have the advantage of being in the Ukraine, but he modifies his early vaporings, and the *Times* honorably gives his retraction a prominent position.

UNCLE SAM IS ONE of the world's great publishers, and among his best humorous periodicals is the weekly, *Reports*, issued by the United States Board of Tax Appeals. Its news is belated, but pungent. We learn how Mr. Albert M. Briggs, the patriotic father of the American Protective League, pleaded with the Government—in vain—to deduct from his taxable income the money he spent organizing "captains" and "inspectors" and "chiefs" and other titled snoopers who worked out their war-time fervor in harassing Hungarian steel-workers and German-born watch-makers. We learn, too, of the ingenuity of the munitions-makers who did their bit turning out artillery on cost-plus contracts—Symington, Anderson and Company, for instance, who contracted to turn out 3,000 guns, at a meager profit of $390 per gun. This corporation, founded for the express purpose of fulfilling a single contract—by the terms of which the Government paid for its building and machinery—sought to charge off the "loss" it suffered when

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the end of the war cut short its opportunity to make the profitable guns. "None of the assets paid into the corporation, for stock or otherwise, cost Symington anything," the unsympathetic tax board pointed out, and it refused to admit that the firm had lost a million dollars which it had never had. The patriots behind the company felt that the artistry of obtaining their contract had a cash "good-will" value—but what has good-will to do with the manufacture of munitions? We recommend the *Report* to students of the psychology of patriotism, and to readers who want a change from *Life* and *Judge*.

THE NOBEL COMMITTEE did well not to give its Peace Prize to any of the temporizing statesmen who explain the impracticability of disarmament at Geneva. They voted it instead to two university professors, veterans of the world-peace movement—Ludwig Quidde of Germany and Ferdinand Buisson of France. Quidde is sixty-nine years old; Buisson eighty-seven. Quidde drew public attention by his "Caligula, a Study in Caesarean Insanity," which sent him to prison for lese majeste soon after the Kaiser mounted the throne; Buisson won his first oratorical success at a peace congress in 1867, where Garibaldi shared the laurels. Throughout the war and since he has been the leading figure in the League for the Rights of Man, which from Dreyfus days has represented in France the spirit of true liberalism—somewhat like the American Civil Liberties Union in the United States. His was one of the first voices raised in France for reconciliation after the war, and Quidde, as historian, editor, member of the Reichstag, and determined democrat, has been in hot water constantly for more than thirty years—during the war he was arrested. Already the Hugenberg press—which expresses in Germany today the intolerant nationalism with which Northcliffe once polluted England—is honoring him with denunciation.

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS of service with one organization is an amazing record for two generations, but for that long the Charles Loring Braces, father and son, have administered the Children's Aid Society of New York. This organization, founded by the elder Brace in 1853, was based on the then entirely fresh and surprising idea that institutional care was less desirable for the great majority of dependent children than rearing in private homes. He succeeded in placing thousands of children in homes on farms or in villages away from the city streets and safe from the regimentation of the orphan asylum. For many years a controversy between the Children's Aid Society and the advocates of orphan asylums must have made Mr. Brace's life trying. After thirty-seven and a half years of unremitting labor, not lightened by controversy, Mr. Brace turned over the work to his son, then a young engineer fresh from the university. And after the same length of time, that same son has relinquished the secretaryship of the organization to Owen Lovejoy. *The Nation* can heartily second the words of the society's president, William Church Osborn, who said:

> I cannot overestimate the great work which Mr. Brace has done for the children of New York. His distinguishing characteristic has been his constant recognition of the interest of each child as a separate person. . . . I feel, however, that with the selection of Mr. Lovejoy the devoted spirit of the Children's Aid Society will be continued and its work will expand with the needs of the children of the city.

The Language of the President

HERALDED to the Cyrus K. Curtis newspapers as being "the most vigorous and dynamic message that he has issued to the Capitol in the four years and four months that he has been in the White House," the President's message to Congress appears to us lame and weak, with as little evidence of courageous leadership as usual. It is to the New York *Herald Tribune* a document rounding out "with exceptional vigor and felicity his political program," expressing "appealingly his political philosophy." If that is the case, then Mr. Coolidge's political philosophy must be to face no issue until compelled to do so, to content himself with stating problems without seeking to solve them by more than temporizing measures. Only when he touches on the question of tax reduction does he hit from the shoulder. Evidently the Chamber of Commerce of the United States has touched him and Secretary Mellon upon the raw. For the first time in his Administration, to our recollection, he assails an organization of business men. Here is his rebuke:

> If special interests, too often selfish, always uninformed of the national needs as a whole, with hired agents using their proposed beneficiaries as engines of propaganda, are permitted to influence the withdrawal of their property from taxation, we shall have a law that is unbalanced and unjust, bad for business, bad for the country, probably resulting in a deficit, with disastrous financial consequences.

This is the solemn truth. What a pity it is that the President cannot see that it applies to other special-interest groups, most strikingly to those manufacturers who rush to the Treasury to obtain special tariff legislation as a sort of government guaranty of their profits.

To the tariff Mr. Coolidge continues his unshakable devotion. Yet, curiously enough, he goes out of his way to prove that 65 per cent of our imports come in free and that, of the remaining 35 per cent, 23 per cent are luxuries and only 12 per cent are goods which can be classified as "manufactures and merchandise." This produces about $560,000,000 in income. Thereupon he makes this cryptic remark—with that "exceptional vigor and felicity" of which the *Herald Tribune* speaks—"While this amount duty-free would be large enough seriously to depress many lines of business in our own country, it is of small importance when spread over the rest of the world." We confess that this is beyond us; we do not know what the President means.

The President declares against naval competition, yet announces that "we should refrain from no needful program." He declares one moment that "we know now that no agreement can be reached [with other nations] which will be inconsistent with a considerable building program on our part," and the next moment, speaking of treaty limitations, declares that where there are none, "the size of the navy which America is to have will be solely for America to determine"—as if this had not always been the case. Then he declares that if we had come to an agreement with Japan and Great Britain we should still have found ourselves facing "the necessity of continuing our building program." So we are not to compete in armaments, but we are to show to all other nations that we shall do what we please without foreign dictation, and we shall promptly build a large number of ships, which we should have built

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anyway if the Geneva Conference had been successful. This is, indeed, "exceptional felicity" of statement.

As for the vital question of agriculture, the President suggests the establishment of a government board to lend money from a revolving fund to aid cooperative marketing. Beyond this, he opines that "any sound and workable proposal to help the farmer will have the earnest support of the government." In other words, in place of bread the farmer again gets a stone. As the New York *World* says, the message "is vague to the point of sheer unintelligibility on practically every contentious issue about which Mr. Coolidge knows that action of some kind is necessary."

The whole document confirms us in our belief that one of the President's great weaknesses is his inability to use the English language properly. There are passages in it which for confusion of thought, lack of clarity, and misuse of words would shame a high-school boy. Were Mr. Coolidge able to use clear and concise English he could surely have made a far better case for himself and his philosophy, such as it is. The clearest example of the injustice the President does himself by his misuse of words remains, of course, his "I do not choose to run for the Presidency." At any time he could have clarified this. It is his own fault if people have believed that he did not mean to withdraw and have credited him with duplicity. The Society for the Prevention of Waste in Industry—if there is one—ought carefully to compute the saving in ink, paper, and brain labor there would have been had Mr. Coolidge used the words in which Charles E. Hughes has just reaffirmed his refusal to run: "I do not wish my name to be used in any contingency. . . . I would neither seek nor accept the nomination."

Governor Smith—Penologist

GREAT fluttering and raucous cries from the nests of the eagles of the daily press—Governor Smith has laid impious hands on the sacred robe of Justice! He has had the temerity to suggest that there might be a better way of determining the penalty to be imposed on a convicted felon than to leave it to the puzzled discretion, the whim, or the caprice of the trial judge. He proposes that the State Crime Commission should take a year to study the question, and he wonders if it would not be better to confine the court to its primary function of trying the question of the guilt or innocence of the accused and to set up a separate tribunal, a board composed of well-paid experts—psychiatrists, physicians, lawyers, etc.—to make a careful study of the convicted offender and, upon the basis of the knowledge so gained, to determine what should be done with him. In order that this study may be made with the requisite thoroughness, the Governor suggests the establishment of a clearing-house to which the convict shall in the first instance be committed and where he shall be kept under close observation until all the facts relative to his mental condition and his criminal propensities have been established. Upon this diagnosis the board will then commit him to the type of institution and for such length of time as the public interest shall seem to require.

"Fantastic," "futuristic," "revolutionary" are some of the terms employed by the startled editors to characterize the Governor's bold conception. One editor describes it as a proposal to "turn our criminal administration upside down"; another begs to remind us that "Albany is not the capital of Utopia." These critics were probably unaware that Governor Smith's proposal is in line with the main current of criminological thought ever since Beccaria, 164 years ago, demanded that the judges should be deprived of the arbitrary power of determining the kind and amount of suffering that should be inflicted on the convicted felon. Let us hope that, in the course of the year that Governor Smith has wisely allowed for the study of the question, these leaders of public opinion will have led the public to agree with the Governor's view that his plan provides "a sensible, modern, up-to-date way of treating criminals."

The proposed plan is neither novel nor revolutionary. "It would deprive judges of the power to sentence persons convicted of felonies," exclaims the horrified editor of the *Times*. This sounds pretty awful until we recall how little is left of this venerated judicial power. Our legislatures are forever curbing it by prescribing and changing maximum and minimum sentences below and beyond which the judges are forbidden to go. Much of the legislative activity of the last two years in this country has gone into the enactment of mandatory penal statutes whose sole object has been to restrict still further the sacred prerogative of the courts in sentencing persons convicted of felony.

It is in connection with the indeterminate sentence (and in some of our States all sentences to State prison are indeterminate) that we have become familiar with the practice of having a non-judicial body—usually the prison board; sometimes, as in New York, a board of parole—invested with the function of determining the actual duration of the sentence. In several of the Western States, notably in California, the court has practically ceased to function as a sentencing agency. The legislature fixes the maximum and the minimum limits of the sentence to be served for a given crime. The jury finds the culprit guilty of that crime, the judge commits the convict to prison, and the prison board, after a study of the prisoner, determines the sentence to be served. This has now been going on for many years, and the skies of California still bend lovingly over her amiable sons and daughters and her temples of justice still stand.

Now, what Governor Smith proposes is, in effect, to provide a thoroughly competent study of every person committed to a State prison before a decision is reached as to the disposition to be made of him. The survey of prison inmates made by the Sing Sing psychiatric clinic in the years 1916-1918 disclosed the appalling fact that, mingled indiscriminately in the prison population of, say, 1,500 men, there were not less than 180 who were definitely insane, 260 irresponsible psychopaths, and more than 400 feeble-minded. The courts had neither the specialized knowledge nor the facilities to ascertain these facts. These wretched creatures were all thrown promiscuously into the same human ant-heap together with some 700 men of normal mental faculties. Is it too much to say that under any decent, not to say humane, system of criminal administration, these unhappy and incongruous elements of the prison population would be weeded out and committed to institutions adapted to their care and treatment? (The splendid hospital erected a few years ago at Sing Sing Prison was built as the first step in the development of such a clearing-house as Governor Smith suggests.) Perhaps before our year of grace is up we shall all give thanks to a just but merciful God for a Governor who refuses to tolerate the chaos in criminal administration which we have so shamefully endured.

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The Forgery as to *The Nation*

ON the cover of this issue of *The Nation* we print in facsimile a document submitted on November 10 to the editor of this journal by a representative of William R. Hearst. On its face it purports to be a warrant, signed by President Calles, for the payment to the editor of $25,000 from the secret expenditure fund of the Department of Industry, Commerce, and Labor "for subscriptions and propaganda in favor of the Government of Mexico." Mr. Hearst's representative was informed at once that no moneys had ever been paid to *The Nation* or to its editor by the Government of Mexico, or any citizen of Mexico, for subscriptions or propaganda, except for legitimate advertising so marked, and that he would immediately take legal steps if the Hearst publications printed this document. Later in the day the representative of Mr. Hearst telephoned that "no publication will be made." None the less, on the second of December, the New York *American* resorted to the cowardly subterfuge of printing the warrant with the name of the editor and that of this journal blocked out. Two other letters were printed in facsimile purporting to show that one other American publication received $25,000, and that $50,000 was paid to an American newspaper syndicate—with the names blotted out in each case—for the same purpose of creating "sentiment in the United States favorable to Mexico." Why did Mr. Hearst delete the names of the two publications and of the newspaper syndicate? If the documents were genuine, he need not have feared to publish them in full. Plainly, Mr. Hearst did not believe in his own evidence.

Mr. Hearst did not stop there. He next charged that he had documents proving that $1,215,000 was paid to four United States Senators to work for the interests of Mexico, and he again showed his contemptible cowardice in deleting the names of the four Senators. This had immediate consequences. On Friday, December 9, the Senate, on motion of Senator Reed of Pennsylvania, voted an inquiry into the charges, to begin December 14, Senator Reed correctly stating that as long as the charges were unsifted "the honor of every member of this body is at stake." Besides Senator Reed, the committee comprises Senators Jones of Washington, Johnson of California, Robinson of Arkansas, and Bruce of Maryland. Already the question has arisen whether the committee can subpoena the Mexican Consul General and fiscal agent in New York or whether that official may claim diplomatic immunity. Mr. Elias, the Mexican Consul General, has declared that he will not stand upon a technicality, but will come forward to cooperate with the committee to sift this matter to the very bottom. And we trust that the Senate will not limit its inquiry to the charges in regard to its own members but will investigate the allegations as to the press and to all other individuals. Honor is as dear to editors as it is to Senators.

We are aware, of course, that the Senators look upon the entire series as impudent but unskilled forgeries and that they joked about them, Senator Borah inquiring where the money was that he should have received as chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. It is pointed out that the Spanish of the documents is faulty, that the Hearst forces changed the date of one dispatch three times in three consecutive editions, and that no officials of any government which disburses secret funds for corrupt purposes are so stupid as to commit anything to paper. Some of the allegations, that Calles was contributing large sums to revolutionists in China and strikers in England to "bolshevize" political and economic movements in those countries, are too absurd to arouse even a smile. Since there is, however, the possibility that the publication of these documents is likely among the unthinking to arouse antagonism to Mexico, their falsity ought to be exposed, and the suggestion that they have been used to filch sums from the Mexican treasury, adjudicated.

The Nation's reputation of sixty-two years' standing, and that of its editor during his thirty-one years of journalism, surely make unnecessary any formal denial of the charge. Everybody knows that its opinions are not for sale and that its ardent support of smaller nations seeking to achieve economic and national independence is always freely forthcoming. The facts are set forth here for purposes of historical record. As insistently as the Senators whom Mr. Hearst has clouded with suspicion, we demand—and in this the American press will join us—that Mr. Hearst print the names and tell the facts—where he got his documents and what members of his staff believed them authentic.

A seal which says:
Estados Unidos Mexicanos

Presidency of the Republic
General Staff

Subject: Issuance of pay order to the Financial Agency of Mexico in New York.

PRESIDENTIAL ORDER

You will please order the Citizen Financial Agent of Mexico in New York to issue a pay order for the sum of $25,000 (Twenty-five thousand dollars) in favor of Mr. Oswal G. Villard, Editor of the weekly review "The Nation," as payment for subscriptions and propaganda in favor of the Government of Mexico.

Charge the item corresponding to this order to secret expenditures of the Department of Industry, Commerce and Labor, obtaining the relative documents from the same department.

SUFRAGIO EFECTIVO NO-REELECCION
The National Palace, Mexico, D. F., Oct. 21, 1926

The President of the Republic

P. ELIAS CALLES
(Hand-written)

ARCHIVES
Treasury Department
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NOTED:
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SG/PEC/RL

To the Citizen Secretary of the Treasury

Translation of the Facsimile Document Appearing on the Cover

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Hoover to the Fore

By OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Washington, December 11

MR. HOOVER has been elected President of the United States during the last few days by various of the Washington correspondents who write with much prestige upon national affairs. The withdrawal of Mr. Coolidge and Mr. Hughes has so impressed them, and their personal fondness for Mr. Hoover is so great, that they see nothing to the Presidential contest now except the nomination of Hoover and Smith, with Hoover winning in an easy canter. It is even being said that Hoover can defeat Smith in New York.

Well, this is a bit astonishing since those who concede Hoover's nomination are veterans in the reporting of politics and as such must know that any candidate who is in the lead at this early date invites the united opposition of the field. It is true that sometimes in a horse race the leader is so far ahead that there is no overtaking him, but it is a long way from December to June, and not even the fact that the National Committeemen for Texas and Maryland have apparently come out for Hoover insures his nomination. A good deal is going to happen in the next six months, and there will be a greater chance for plain speaking and a fight on the floor of the convention than there has been for years. There is Senator Borah, for instance. He is a figure to be reckoned with, and he is going into that convention to make the fight of his life, both in the Resolutions Committee and on the floor of the convention for the purpose of making the party toe the mark on the prohibition issue. That fight will bear considerable relation to the Presidential nomination.

Again, even these veteran correspondents who have decided that Hoover is the man will not deny that the outgoing President is in the position to prevent the nomination of anyone he does not like, and the correspondents generally are saying that it is Secretary Mellon who will name the candidate. It is perfectly clear, too, that the Administration and Mr. Mellon are not sitting up nights cheering for the present Vice-President of the United States, and arranging to have the black Southern delegations voted for him. There is, however, no clear proof that the President and Mr. Mellon have committed themselves to the Hoover candidacy. Should they do so the Hoover cohorts might well throw their hats into the air. It would all be over except the shouting.

But the relationship of the President to Secretary Hoover is one of the puzzles of Washington. It is known that he has constantly sent for him, and it is positively stated that he has unloaded on Mr. Hoover's shoulders many things which a President ordinarily takes charge of himself. This may be the reason why it is reported that various members of the Cabinet have at times gone to the President and protested that Mr. Hoover was butting into their affairs. But while it is true that the President has repeatedly intrusted matters of great moment, like the supervision of the Mississippi Valley flood relief, to Mr. Hoover he has also on several occasions shown what amounts to animosity to his Secretary of Commerce, or at least he has shown marked personal feeling. Three of these instances readily suggest themselves. On July 20 Secretary Hoover appeared at the President's offices at Rapid City, South Dakota, to report to him as to the relief work for flood sufferers. Mr. Coolidge treated him with such marked coldness that it was the subject of dispatches. Last winter when the question came up of a possible successor to Secretary Kellogg, Mr. Coolidge went out of his way, again with considerable show of feeling, to tell the correspondents that one man would never be appointed Secretary of State by him and that man was Herbert Hoover. Again, when Mr. Hoover made an admirable statement that in his opinion loans should not be made to foreign countries for other than economic purposes, thereby slapping at the Department of State and the President for the then recent loan to the Nicaraguan Government for the purpose of buying American arms and ammunition, the President took occasion within a few days to disagree emphatically.

Secretary Hoover may be the nominee, but there will be a hard fight against him. The question of his eligibility under the constitutional clause requiring fourteen years of consecutive residence will be brought up against him, and so will the fact that in 1918 he called upon Americans to vote for Democratic candidates for Congress and to defeat the Republican Party. In 1920 he was for taking us into the League of Nations lock, stock, and barrel, and he upheld the World Court most enthusiastically. A veteran Senator has just said to me that if Hoover can qualify to run on a Republican platform he will have to eat more of his own words than any man in generations who has been a candidate. His friends tell me that Hoover is quite a reformed character, that he is no longer for the League, and that he has seen the light in the matter of the World Court. Cannot a man in public life change his opinions? they ask. Of course he can and does, precisely as Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson changed their respective views on woman suffrage, the initiative, the referendum, the recall of judges, William J. Bryan and a cocked hat, and innumerable questions. But the fact that a man can change so readily, that in 1918 he can be a good Democrat opposed to all the Republican policies and in 1920 refused to say whether he was a Democrat or a Republican until he found out which party was more likely to nominate him for the Presidency, certainly stamps him both as a politician and an opportunist. A letter of his written in 1920, expressing his doubt as to what he was at that moment, was shown in facsimile to members of the Republican National Committee at their recent meeting in this city.

If I were a sporting man I should be inclined to bet some money on the proposition that the Republican nominee for the Presidency may be a man who has not yet figured in the news. It can hardly be Longworth for certain reasons, though Longworth is highly popular and comes from the traditional President-making State of Ohio. One thing is true: The professional politicians are not for Hoover. In so far as this is due to the fact that he has stood them off where they should be stood off, he deserves credit for it and it will help him. It is their fear, too, that if Hoover is elected President he will be the President. He will be, there is no doubt about that; he will be as autocratic a one as we have had, and, if elected, what he thinks and plans while in the White House will in considerable degree be known by just one person—Herbert Hoover.

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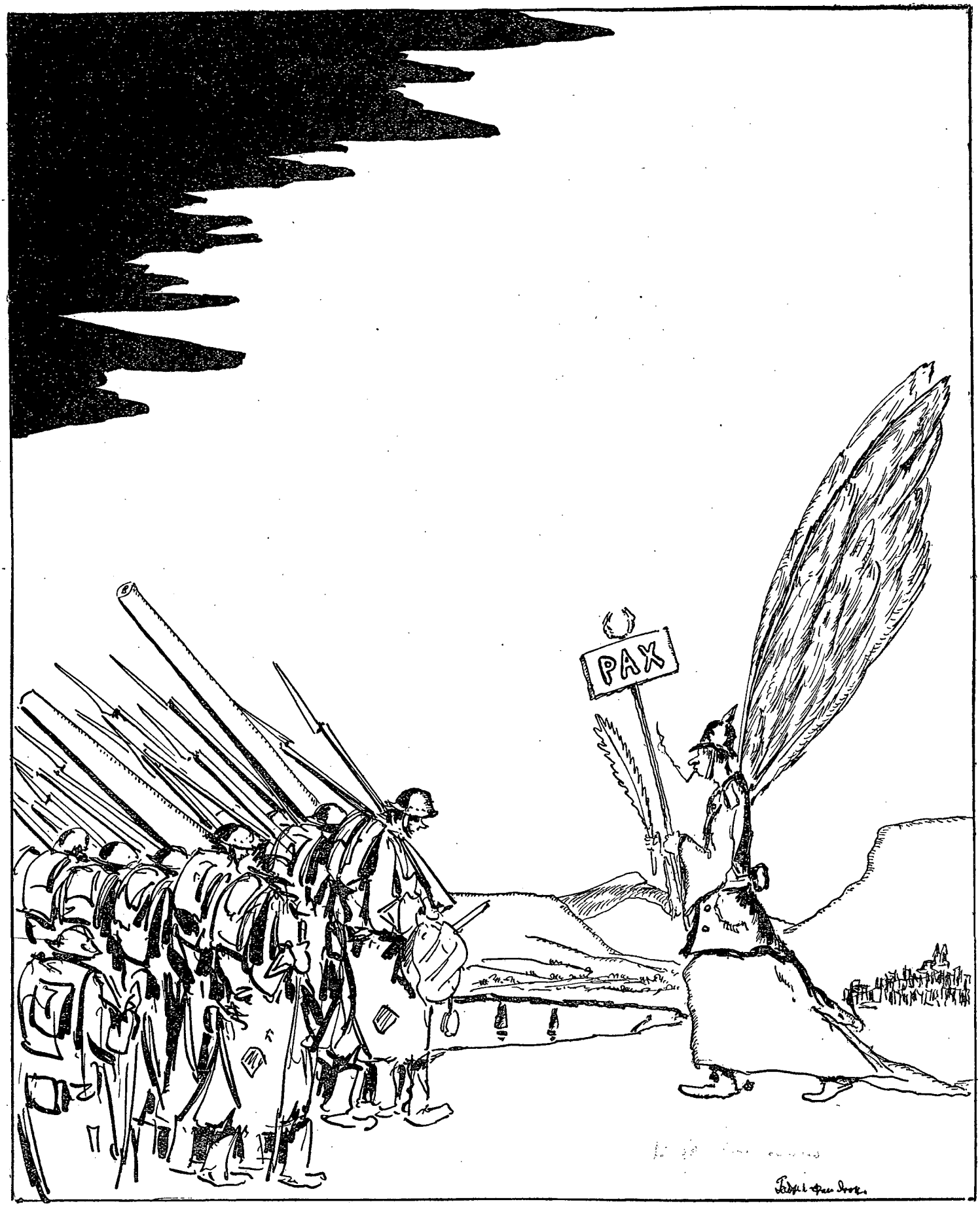

The Angel of Peace in Modern Dress

Presented at Geneva by the Soviet Government on November 30, 1927

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It Seems To Heywood Broun

BETWEEN issues of *The Nation* I celebrated my thirty-ninth birthday quietly. There was no public demonstration of any sort and I myself might have overlooked the occasion but for a letter from a life-insurance agent who jogged my memory and asked whether it would not be wise for me to take a larger policy before it was too late. None of this is set down in petulance, and I should scarcely announce the approach of senility except for the fact that I have fashioned an excellent resolution to be most studiously maintained from now till I turn forty. For an entire year I promise to use no labels in regard to men or measures. "Radical" is out; "conservative" and "liberal." Very likely I will refer to none as "artist" or sneer at things "Victorian." Along with all the rest goes "modern," "progressive," and "glamorous." "Intriguing" and "arresting" I swore off last year. Instead of saying that I'm a "pacifist" it will be enough to stipulate an opposition to all wars. I mean all wars. Those who allow a willingness to fight at Concord or Bull Run let down their guard. There never yet was any conflict which did not seem in its first days quite similar to Armageddon. In quitting "pacifist" I am not frightened off by that old puzzler about my grandmother and the alien grenadier. If that comes up I'll handle it. "Box him, Granny; use your left," would be my counsel while I slipped out in back to call a traffic cop.

The new and momentous decision to eschew definitive words was not arrived at in cold blood. For speaking ill of Soviet terrorism I have been slated by publications which favor Russia thick or thin. My words, they say, illustrate the working of a "liberal" mind. But I don't want to be a liberal even without the quotation marks. It is an adjective much coupled with the New York *World* and yet I find myself miles away from that paper on the question of disarmament. The leader in that journal says the Russian proposal is propaganda for the cafes. "For Mr. Litvinov to come to Geneva and pretend that Russia is run by non-resistant pacifists is a very poor joke," declares the *World*. I cannot find any part of his proposal which says that. I see more grim and sorry humor in bleeding and bankrupt nations arming against each other.

Had the *World*, or any other American newspaper, gone to the trouble of reading the Soviet proposal in full it might have found this sentence: "While insisting upon the views just stated, the delegation is nevertheless ready to participate in any and every discussion of the question of the limitation of armaments whenever practical measures really leading to disarmament are proposed." I take this to mean, "If you don't like our scheme, suggest a better one." To my ear the language is quite as clear as anything coming from Mr. Coolidge.

If anybody says that it will be difficult to effect complete disarmament I agree readily enough. But difficult things are not necessarily impractical. Judging by results, every move made so far by the practical politicians in the matter of reducing armies has been wholly visionary and fantastic. The complete abolition of armaments can hardly be accomplished without extended discussion, but after all the Russians did not name next Tuesday and set the hour at 9 a. m. No camel with a broken back can be restored to health by the removal of one straw. The world needs not a lighter load but none at all. The Soviet delegation set up an ideal, and if there is no hand steady enough to hit it square why can't we aim and come as close as possible?

For the sake of my grandmother, already mentioned, I would prefer to have each nation still retain a federal police force. This can easily be attacked as a quibble. There would have to be discussion as to the equipment of such forces and their number. But quibbles are better than curt refusals. I don't like police and I prefer them to soldiers. Patrolmen very likely would object to being sent to Nicaragua. And in the police there are no major generals.

My own pet scheme is simpler than that of Litvinov. The current Congress could pass a law making it a felony for any officer of the United States army or navy to write for the magazines, speak at public dinners, or give statements to the newspapers. I would not even permit them to tell funny stories. They should go home with the coffee. Few will contend that any good has come from speeches by service men. They are by nature strong and silent. Let these excellent qualities be preserved.

And before leaving the question of publicity I am converted back to the old notion that reticence is becoming to still another profession. Doctors once thought it was infamous ever to mention medicine in the presence of laymen. That has all passed. No longer is the physician content to express himself upon a prescription blank in the brief space allotted beneath the letterhead announcing "Blank's drug-store has the finest soda fountain in the city." The doctor has taken up the pencil, the pen, and the portable. All current lists of books are filled with scale drawings of the esophagus and reviewers are now privileged to read themselves to sleep with chapters on diseases of the liver. And naturally there has leaped up, like Jack long repressed within his box, the medical humorist. He jests at scars who has himself made the incisions; give him gout to play with and you'll find the fellow antic.

But I like their jokes better than their attempts to frighten people. The press of the country is conducting at the present time a drive concerning cancer. In medicine I am wholly regular and have no faith in any form of heretical healing, and yet I think the method of educating the public against a dread disease shows the fundamental and shameful ignorance of doctors in the matter of human psychology. I quote from the New York *Times*:

> The lash of fear is now being openly used in the anti-cancer campaign being conducted by the New York Committee of the American Society for the Control of Cancer to drive both potential and actual victims of the disease into the examining rooms of physicians and surgeons. According to leaders in the campaign the end justifies the

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means, as fear of cancer is only ignorance which education will overcome.

In the broad sense of the word everybody now alive is a potential cancer victim. The doctors are saying that in order to save a few many must suffer. Nor is this suffering merely a temporary thing. Fear is a disease and one of the most stubborn. Any fool can frighten a patient and possibly there are a few dozen doctors in the country competent to cure him. I honestly believe this estimate is high. Ten is more like it. The doctors are moving upon the theory that it is necessary to infect the entire nation with phobias in order to handle an ailment which is still a disease of a considerable minority. In this there is no soundness.

And there is room for debate about the propaganda to have each one of us, no matter how he's feeling, go and submit to examination each six months or every year. Without question the doctor may find something insidious, but unfortunately many of these hidden maladies are still beyond the powers of his therapy. Certainly in such cases it is better not to know. Nor can I think of any better way in which to recruit the growing army of the neurotic. The man who feels all right may still be sick, but let him not tamper with his luck is what I say.

My birthday came and went without the aid of any doctor, but I am among other things a little superstitious. If any sudden ill befell me soon, or now, the paragraphs I've written could be used against me by the apostles of medical preparedness. I do not want to run the risk of serving as a horrible example. The advice I gave is excellent but it is too late for me to take it. I did not get examined on my birthday but I went twice last week.

The Passing of Trotzky

By LOUIS FISCHER

Moscow, November 16, 1927

THE passing of Trotzky may become one of the classic ironies of history. On the tenth anniversary of the revolution to which he contributed so much his picture was torn down in the streets of Moscow. A few days later he was expelled from the Communist Party and thus divorced from participation in the conduct of the revolution and of the Soviet Government.

To some, the tragedy of Trotzky testifies to the ingratitude of humanity and the cruelty of fate. It is sad to think of him as down and out, eating out his heart in the conviction that others less able than he are blundering. This is unfortunate, yet events may take a still more unfortunate turn. For any attempt on the part of the Opposition to continue its activities may land it in jail. Those who talk of a *Putsch* or a military revolt are ignorant of conditions in Russia and harbor a completely false impression of the lengths to which even a distressed, embittered Opposition may go at present. But the Central Committee or Ceca (not Cheka) of the party will give no more democratic freedom to the expelled Opposition than it does to Mensheviks or Social Revolutionaries, and if Trotzky and his followers try to take that freedom they will court arrest or some other form of silencing.

Yet it is safe to prophesy that there will always be an opposition. Trotzky, Zinoviev, Rakovsky, Preobrazhensky, Kamenev, Smilga, Peterson, Bakaev, Evdokimov, Muralov, Radek, and all other spokesmen of the present Opposition may be removed from the political scene. But another faction will rise in its stead. The present policies of the majority of the party will not go unchallenged.

The other day a fairly intelligent Communist said to me: "I detest the Opposition not alone because it stands for certain doctrines abhorrent to me but because of its Left influence on the party." At no time in the last two years had the Opposition the remotest chance of gaining control of the party organization. If it were to remain in the ranks now its chances would be as small. Yet it has been an important factor in stemming the majority's slow movement to the Right. Many of the Opposition planks have been lifted and nailed into the Stalin platform, sometimes in veiled, often in undisguised form. "Right" in this context does not mean reaction. It is perhaps best translated "the road of lesser resistance." It means concessions to the peasantry, moderation at home and abroad, and less active interest in world revolution. Conditions in the Soviet Union demand such policies. This is the strength of the Stalin majority.

The Ceca's second pillar of strength is the growing prosperity of the country. Even admitting the Opposition's contentions regarding the mistakes of the majority, the fact remains that the material welfare of the greatest number has been furthered by the present administration. Such success undermines the position of the Trotzky faction.

Any opposition, moreover, starts under a handicap, for unity is a fetish in the Communist Party. This is a product of the party's disciplined past as well as of the necessity for concerted action at all times. Factionalism is anathema to the Communist, and Trotzky has been defeated as much by the argument that he is attempting to disrupt the party as by criticism of the basic principles he advances. Many adherents of the Opposition, though convinced of the justice of its claims, left its ranks when they felt that the tactics employed—the secret printing press, clandestinely distributed petitions, relations with non-partisans, and street demonstrations—constituted a danger to the "monolithism" of the party.

Another weakness of the Opposition is the personality of Trotzky. Though Lenin stood several cubits above him in political stature, Trotzky undoubtedly is the greatest living figure of the revolution. His magnetism, oratory, culture, brilliance of mind, tongue, and pen, his fire, honesty, and sincerity make him a born leader. But he is no politician. Throughout the entire length of his remarkable career in the Socialist-Communist world he has stood out as an individual. He can never organize his following, though he is capable of mobilizing the Red Army and reorganizing the railroads. He antagonizes by his apparent vanity and capriciousness. (Stalin calls him an actor.) It is his dazzling light but not his warmth which attracts. He is capable of spectacular action but not of subtlety.

Leon Trotzky, moreover, has been guilty of numerous

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political errors. He was mistaken in regard to the Brest-Litovsk peace where he differed with Lenin. He was wrong in his trade-union controversy with Lenin in 1921. Subsequently he opposed the fiscal reform on the ground that inflation would help industry. But developments have shown that a stable currency can be the rock on which the entire economic system of the country rests. Several years ago he proposed industrial "concentration," which would have involved the closing of some of the largest plants in Russia, the Putilov works in Leningrad, for instance. Yet more recent events have proved that not only are all prerevolutionary units necessary but new factories must be built.

Besides, Trotzky became a Bolshevik only in 1917. Theretofore he fought Lenin almost uninterruptedly. To be sure, he was on the spot at the hour of need, in the 1905 abortive revolution and in the successful effort of ten years ago. Nevertheless, his Menshevism prior to the revolution makes him more vulnerable to the charge of Menshevism today, and the Stalin majority is not slow to exploit this weakness.

Records of the past, Trotzky's personality, Communist worship of unity, the adherence of Zinoviev and Kamenev, the "strike-breakers of 1917"[1]—all these are used against the Opposition and frequently serve to obscure the issues of the present struggle.

What are these issues? The subject is extremely involved, but the core of the dispute is, and always has been, the peasant question. The Opposition maintains that the village is a capitalistic organization, that its dynamics are capitalistic, and, above all, that the *kulak* or rich mujik is growing wealthier at the expense of the poor and "middle" peasants. In 1925 the party legalized the renting of land and the hiring of agricultural labor. Since then the area rented has doubled. The Opposition maintains that this vitiates the nationalization of land. Renting of land in Soviet Russia means the transfer of land usufruct from the poor peasant who does not possess the equipment or the live stock indispensable to cultivation to the rich peasant who does. The *kulak* holds more than his proportionate share of cattle, machinery, land. As a result, according to official statistics, 58 per cent of the country's agricultural surplus was in the hands of 6 per cent of the country's peasant households on April 1, 1926. Since then the percentages have increased the advantage of the well-to-do upper crust.

A sharp differentiation of classes, the Opposition says, is taking place in rural districts. The middle peasant, constituting the bulk of the peasantry, is losing ground. Some of its members are rising into the *kulak* class. Others are sinking into the *bedniak* or poor class. This was not the intention of the revolution. The *kulak* is filtering into the cooperatives and capturing control of some soviets. What is especially important, the rich peasants today hoard no less than 800,000,000 poods of grain. Consequently, cereal exports have not increased nor bread prices fallen despite three successive good crops.

The Central Committee does not deny the growth of the *kulaks*. But it denies that the "middle mujik" is being destroyed by the movements of the upper and lower millstones. On the contrary, the middle class is receiving recruits from the *bedniaks* who are improving their status, though it is admitted that some poor peasants are dropping into the class of "proletarianized," landless agricultural workers.

The Ceca says there are fewer *bedniaks;* the Opposition that there are more. Now it will be recalled that the recent jubilee manifesto of the Soviet Government, in addition to proclaiming an impending seven-hour day, exempted 10 per cent of all peasant households from direct taxes, thus raising the number of such households from 25 per cent to 35 per cent of the total in the Union. On the face of it, at least, this step confirms the Opposition's thesis. Indeed, the Opposition claims that the 10 per cent increase is a leaf from its book and points out, with justifiable satisfaction, that in April, 1926, Stalin stigmatized as "anti-peasant" the Opposition's demand that the number of tax-exempt households be raised from 25 to 40 per cent.

Here is the crux of the controversy. If the number of *kulaks* is really growing, the Opposition is right, and the Government should seek to check the economic and political power of the rich peasantry. This the Stalin Ceca now proposes to do. The Opposition replies that it is late, though not too late, that this is its plank, and finally that the new policy must be expressed in deeds, not words. Furthermore it adds that if the middle peasants are becoming either *kulaks* or *bedniaks* the Government cannot base its policy on the bulk of the peasantry, but must expect village support only from the poor and proletarian elements. Therefore it must prevent their exploitation at the hands of the upper crust by imposing heavier taxes on the richer peasants. Such a check would mean more money in the coffers of the Government, hence more money for the industrialization of the country and a speedier equalization of the balance between the city and village. (This is one phase of what Trotzky called the "permanent revolution.")

Besides, if the village is capitalistic, you cannot build socialism in a land that is predominantly peasant and industrially backward. The Opposition accordingly protests against the national self-sufficiency of the Stalinites. It argues that the revolution in Russia cannot be an ultimate success unless the world revolution eventuates. (This is another phase of the "permanent revolution.")

Concretely, the Oppositionists are "super-industrialists," as their enemies call them. The majority, too, favors and furthers industrialization. That is recorded in years of achievement. But the Opposition believes that Stalin approaches industry from the point of view of the requirements of the peasantry rather than as a thing in itself and as the only guaranty of a successful revolution. The Opposition would exploit the village for the sake of the city. The Ceca wishes industry to serve the village.

These, in outline, are the policies of the two groups. In practical every-day politics, the differences express themselves thus: the Ceca proposes to reduce prices on manufactured articles so that the peasants may buy more. The Opposition objects; formerly, it even advocated higher prices. The Ceca countenances the reduction of all taxes in the village. The Opposition suggests heavier taxes on the *kulak*, no taxes on the *bedniak*, and complains that the peasant is being taxed less and the worker more. Stalin proclaims the dawn of a seven-hour day. Trotzky replies: this is bluff and a sop to the proletariat which would prefer more rubles to more leisure. The Opposition advocates a forced bread loan in order to compel the rich peasant to give up his surplus grain.

[1] See my article, Lenin versus Trotzky, in *The Nation* of January 21, 1925.

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I never like to deal with the future. Yet there is a temptation to have one peep. The Opposition has been descrying the beginnings of new phenomena in the Soviet Union. If these assume larger proportions, some kind of opposition, within or without the party, legal or illegal, will not be downed, be the fate of the Trotzky faction what it may. It will be a city or proletarian opposition against too pronounced pro-peasant tendencies in the party.

The personal fate of the present Opposition leaders? I do not know. If they "behave" they can remain at liberty in the country, and live in the Kremlin as Radek does, for instance, though he holds no office or job of any kind. They can support themselves—for no government bureau will employ them—by writing on non-political subjects. But will they consent to such passivity when the revolution, in their opinion, is suffering?

Americans We Like

Norris of Nebraska

By FREDERIC BABCOCK

The Eighth in a Series of Personality Portraits

"I AM on the downhill side—sometimes, I think, traveling rapidly. The end cannot be very many years in advance. I think I have, to a great extent, run my race. If I can do some good while I am traveling over the balance of the road I want to do it, because I realize I am going over it for the last time.

"I am not conscious of having a single selfish ambition. Neither money nor office holds any enchanting allurements. . . . I could not always have made this statement truthfully. There have been times in my life—and I presume it is true of most public men—when ambition, and I think an honorable ambition, caused in my heart great concern about such things. But I have lost all that. I have received all the honor I can ever expect. I should like to repay the people by an unprejudiced and unbiased service in their behalf. I have no other ambition."

Those two paragraphs, contained in an intimate and informal letter to a personal friend, reveal, much better than could any outsider, the character of George William Norris, senior Senator from Nebraska and possible candidate for the Presidency in 1928. They tell why the liberals of America have been drawn to him as they have been drawn to few other men in modern times.

It is difficult for me, a self-expatriated Nebraskan, to give an accurate view of George Norris. I admit I am prejudiced. He was my boyhood idol. I have worshiped him ever since the day, at the height of the war fever, when it seemed that the whole country had joined Woodrow Wilson in denouncing him and his associates as "that little group of wilful men," and when he came home, told the truth, confounded his critics, and emerged unscathed.

A homespun man is Norris, a man entirely lacking in political, personal, or intellectual vanity. He is quiet in his manner. His face is open, frank, almost sad, but friendly. Structurally, he is strong, deep-chested, with wide shoulders. That, of course, comes from his breeding. Born of clean American stock in a farming community in Sandusky County, Ohio, he lived as a child among eighty acres of stumps. His father died when George was four years old. The elder son was killed in the Civil War. The mother was left with ten daughters and the one son. The family was in straitened circumstances.

"I have battled, battled, for everything I ever got," Norris once told an interviewer. The slow tragedy of dull poverty and toil was his in his younger years. He knew what it was to fight for a living. His whole life has been a record of modest triumphs. He has fought his way inch by inch. But it is axiomatic that if things had come easier for him he probably would not be where he is now. In his manner, in his processes of mind and his mode of living he is still as simple, as plain, as direct, and as unassuming as when he was on the upward climb. He knows more, of course, than he did then. His mind is more mature and has broadened. His convictions, however, for the most part are based on what he has personally known and seen, rather than on deductions from wide reading. He is not afraid to think and do for himself.

He first appeared on the national scene in 1903 as a member of the House. And he first had the spotlight thrown on him when, in the Sixty-first Congress, he led the fight for the overthrow of Cannon and Cannonism. He has been an insurgent since there has been any notable insurgency in the House. From the start, he declined to become one of those glorified political peons that are lightly worked, carefully clothed, highly paid, and accorded every privilege save that of independent thought and action. He did not rebel against the authority of the Cannon group because of sentiment in his home district. It was the other way around. At that time, as in a number of more recent instances, he has had to educate his constituency to accept his views.

"I saw men on either side of the political fence follow blindly the dictates of their machines," he says. "Even when there was no question of party fealty concerned, they would vote as their bosses ordered, dumbly, stupidly, like a lot of sheep or geese. I believed in the absolute freedom of thought and action, and, cherishing feelings of this sort, it did not take me long to become an objector—an insurgent."

The war came along, and with it hysteria. In the Senate Norris voted against the armed-neutrality legislation demanded by President Wilson, and later braved the condemnation of most of the country by voting, with others of the "wilful" group, against the resolution of war. The storm of denunciation centered on the West; the full force of it swooped down upon La Follette and Norris. The pseudo-patriots and the "stand-by-the-President" boys licked their chops and prepared for the killing.

Norris outmaneuvered them. Before they could get to him he offered to resign. He called upon the Nebraska Governor to ask the legislature to provide for a special election to choose his successor. "If the verdict is against me," he told the Governor, "I shall at once place my resignation in your hands."

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While the matter was still being debated he left Washington and came to Lincoln. There was no welcoming committee at the station. As I recall it, he was left almost alone. A raw reporter, I called on him at his room in the old Lindell hotel. He gave me all the time I wanted, answered fully every question I put to him concerning his extraordinary actions at Washington—and he told me plenty. The following day he addressed a joint session of the legislature and that night he hired the city auditorium, introduced himself to the throng—and once more told plenty.

But a peculiar thing took place at that night meeting. The thousands present did not ask him for any explanation of what he had been up to or why he had defied the President. They did not wish any explanation. They showed him when he first appeared on the platform, and all the time he was speaking, and at the close of his address, that they were strong for him, that they would stand by him. Again and again they rose to their feet and cheered.

Norris went back to his duties in the Senate, and the talk of forcing him out of office became less than a whisper. The common people, the people among whom Norris was raised and still moved, had convinced the politicians that it was no use; that they would never stand for his being betrayed. They have been repeating the performance at intervals ever since.

Of that "wilful" Senate group Norris alone remains. La Follette of Wisconsin, Stone of Missouri, Lane of Oregon, and Gronna of North Dakota are dead—hastened to their graves, their friends insist, by the venom heaped upon them during the days of the great insanity. Vardaman of Mississippi has long since retired. Norris, weary of it all, but with no tone of defeat in his voice or words, still holds the fort. He said, in a "ten-years-after" interview:

> We went to war to make an end to militarism, and there is more militarism today than ever before.
>
> We went to war to make the world safe for democracy, and there is less democracy today than ever before.
>
> We went to war to dethrone autocracy and special privilege, and they thrive everywhere throughout the world today.
>
> We went to war to win the friendship of the world, and they hate us today.
>
> We went to war to purify the soul of America, and instead we only drugged it.
>
> We went to war to awaken the American people to the idealistic concepts of liberty, justice, and fraternity, and instead we awakened them only to the mad pursuit of money.
>
> All this, and more, the war brought us. It is our harvest from what we sowed.
>
> You ask me if I would vote again today as I voted ten years ago. The answer is I would.

His record since the war is fresh in the minds of American liberals. They remember gratefully, among other things, his fights for the preservation of Muscle Shoals; against the water-power combine; for a constitutional amendment doing away with "lame-duck" congresses; to abolish the electoral college and for the direct election of the President and the Vice-President; for the exploited farmers of the West and the rights of the oppressed throughout the country; for a recognition of the aspirations of the underdogs of other nations; his refusal to bow to the rule of patronage; his amazing attempt to defeat the Vareism of his own political party—all these are at last known to the public.

His third term in the Senate expires in 1931. Then, as he announced some time ago, he will become a candidate for Governor of Nebraska. His standing and prestige there are such that his election is virtually assured. It has been his wish for years to assume some day the leadership in a movement for the reform of State government. He favors a one-house legislature of about twenty-five members, the consolidation and cutting down of State elective offices, the appointment of all employees on a strictly civil-service merit basis, and the nomination and election of the members of the legislature and the officials on a nonpartisan ticket. What a Utopia! But what a man to bring it about!

Meanwhile, the people back home have organized a Norris-for-President Committee. The attitude of Senator Norris himself (he has tried to withdraw from the race, but Nebraska will not hear of it) was expressed in these words to one of his friends:

> I do not intend to take any part in the primary. In fact, I rather feel as though no active part ought to be taken in the campaign, even by my friends. I have been weighed in the balance so often—have been on the firing line so long. If the people do not want the kind of a man I am I want them to get somebody else. I do not want any money spent in my behalf. But if the campaign against me needs attention because it is unfair, I should like to see such matters completely met.

That's Norris of Nebraska!

> Everybody in the State, I believe, knows where I stand on practically every public question, and I think they know me so well that if some proposition arose that never had been thought of or discussed in a campaign most people, if they understood the question itself, would be able to tell where I would stand on it. . . .
>
> It is a discouraging thing to continue to fight losing fights. Say what you will, a man is so constituted that, once in a while at least, he wants to win, and when a small body of us fight over and over again the same old battle with the same old result, working, as we believe, for the benefit of all the people, and always meeting with defeat, there comes a time when the spirit as well as the flesh weakens. . . .

Upon the death of his great colleague, Robert M. La Follette, Senator Norris said:

> His was the voice of justice and humanity, calling God's common people to battle for righteousness. He blazed the path through the wilderness of suspicion and doubt, leading the way to a higher civilization, a nobler life, a happier day.
>
> His life was one continuous struggle in behalf of the downtrodden and the oppressed. He met upon the field of governmental combat the advocates of monopoly, of greed, and never once did he compromise or surrender.
>
> To those who loved him and followed him and believed in him there will always be the happy knowledge and consolation that even his bitterest enemies never once accused him of infidelity to the cause of righteousness as he saw it.
>
> Defeat meant to him only new determination for the next struggle. He turned a deaf ear to those who even suggested the possibility of compromise for his personal advancement, and in answer to suggestions from the enemy that a different course might bring him power and popularity we can hear him now, with all the strength of his tremendous power and all the vitality of his courageous soul, crying out aloud his refusal.

Those words stand as a tribute to a magnificent man. They apply equally well to the magnificent man who uttered them.

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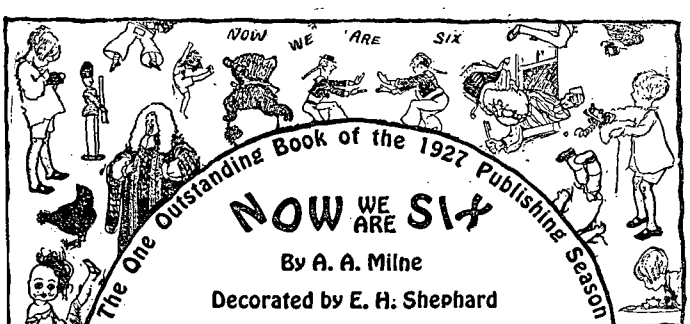

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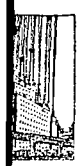

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Maine's Water-Power Fight

By EARL SPARLING

Portland, November 28

FOR two years Samuel Insull, the Chicago power and political magnate, has been battling in Maine for what is called the greatest water-power prize in New England. Mr. Insull did not start the quarrel. He only inherited it. But the voters of Maine, of whom there are still a few, are beginning to realize just what that means.

The voters were asked with some ceremony on October 18 last to vote their voting privilege into limbo. The irony of the request did not go unnoticed. About 30 per cent of the voting population reported to the polls, and the proposed abolition of the State's direct-primary system was defeated by a vote of something like two to one.

The attack on the primary system was waged by politicians known to be favorable to the power interests. Mr. Insull personally kept out of the picture, but the attack was applauded by his lieutenants in Maine. From the nation as a whole, not to mention the 70 per cent of Maine voters who remained at home with the cider, the referendum received an enthusiastic inattention. But lack of audience is not always indication of a poor show. Behind Maine's referendum lies one of the most interesting political upheavals since the rise of what Dr. Charles A. Beard refers to as American civilization.

Since 1917 a small group of men in Maine have battled furiously to protect the State's title to its hydro-electric resources. Originally two questions were involved: one, whether power companies should be allowed to ship hydro-electricity out of the State; two, whether the State should retain title to its few remaining lake reservoirs. More recently has arisen the more important question of whether Maine's great wealth of water-power should not be used primarily to give Maine people electricity at the lowest cost possible. The latter question is tending to become paramount since the advent two months ago of the Portland *Evening News*, a new paper independent of the power interests and edited by Dr. E. H. Gruening. Maine is thus today one of the chief battle-fields in the rapidly developing national war for cheaper electricity.

The Maine power fight actually started in 1909, but it gathered momentum after Mr. Insull began to buy up Maine power properties two years ago. Mr. Insull today controls companies reputed to own two-thirds of the State's total developed water-power. And today the Republican Party in Maine is divided into two opposing camps. The fight for and against the primary has been one of the chief results of this split.

Percival P. Baxter, then a State legislator, got on the Maine statute-books in 1909 a law prohibiting exportation of Maine's hydro-electricity, on the theory that, if kept in the State, the power would attract industries which otherwise might settle elsewhere. The law caused little trouble at first, but when Baxter, after eight years in retirement, returned to the legislature in 1917 and took steps to strengthen the prohibition or exportation, the war was on. Baxter's new proposal was that every power-company charter granted by the State should carry a clause prohibiting each company specifically from exportation.

A State-wide advertising campaign, in which thousands of dollars were spent, was opened the next year by sixteen associated power companies and large power users, the latter being paper companies directly interested in power development. The *apparent* purpose of the advertising campaign, according to Baxter, was to defeat reelection of himself and his associates and "thus forever end water-power discussion." From that day to this water-power has been inextricably involved in Maine politics.

The fight led Baxter from the lower house to the State Senate and thence to the governor's chair, and as he rose he became more and more determined. As Governor he elaborated his program by proposing in 1923 that a valuable dam site on the Kennebec River be not deeded in perpetuity to the power companies but leased for an annual rental. The legislature had passed a bill deeding the site as usual. Baxter vetoed the bill. The legislature repassed it over his veto. The Governor carried his fight to the people, calling a referendum on the issue. The legislature backed down, repealing the bill before the referendum could be had, which was at least one time that the power of the voters stood directly in the way of the power companies.

Samuel Insull, through his Middle West Utilities Company, a great holding organization, entered Maine just about the time Baxter was retiring from the governorship. Baxter was succeeded at Augusta by Ralph O. Brewster, who as a State Senator had opposed the wishes of the power owners just as consistently. Brewster had been elected only after a bitter campaign and a recount of the votes.

Soon after Governor Brewster took office a petition was presented for a referendum on the abolition of the direct-primary system. The legislature passed it to Brewster who promptly threw it out, alleging that it contained some 4,000 questionable signatures. The petition had been circulated by Fred O'Connell, a Republican leader who was later to work strenuously to elect Arthur R. Gould, a power-company owner, to the United States Senate.

Baxter announced his candidacy for the United States Senate in 1926 and Brewster ran for reelection to the governorship. Things looked bad for the power owners in Maine. Brewster was successful. Baxter was not. Baxter was defeated for the Republican nomination by Arthur R. Gould but even in victory the direct primary proved an embarrassing institution.

Hardly were the congratulations over before Governor Brewster charged officially that from $50,000 to $100,000 had been spent illegally in Gould's behalf. The direct-primary law limits expenditures to $1,500. Brewster's allegation still stands despite a subsequent State hearing which exonerated the Gould organization. It is common talk in Maine that Brewster considered that hearing to have been a farce and that he has a wealth of evidence to present to any United States Senate committee that cares to investigate the matter.

Events came fast in 1927. J. Martin Insull, brother of Samuel, broadcast through the State that the Insull organization stood ready to invest $50,000,000 in Maine should the exportation measure be repealed. The State

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legislature passed a bill for a referendum on the matter. Brewster used his veto. And to make matters worse, the power companies felt it necessary at last, after four years of discussion, to accept a lease on the Kennebec River dam site instead of the desired deed.

Then came a double attack on the primary law. Representative Robert Hale introduced in the legislature a bill to modify the $1,500-campaign-fund law and allow candidates to spend money for newspaper advertising without limit. O'Connell introduced a new petition for a referendum on abolition of the primary. Hale is a member of a Portland law firm, the head of which is president of the Insull company in Portland. O'Connell was apparently unconnected with the power interests except that he had worked strenuously to elect Gould, his fellow-townsman, to the United States Senate. O'Connell, however, soon took a back seat in the primary attack.

An organization was formed to work toward abolition of the primary. The president of this organization was former Governor William T. Cobb, who had been in charge of the power-company advertising campaign in 1918. One of the vice-presidents was Mrs. Guy P. Gannett, wife of the largest newspaper publisher in Maine. Gannett owns or controls four out of Maine's eleven daily newspapers. His morning and afternoon publications in Portland were without opposition until the arrival of Dr. Gruening and the Portland *Evening News*. Gannett was formerly a large power owner and sold his common stock in the Central Maine Power Company to Insull in 1925. Whether Gannett still owns any other power-company stock is not known, but he is still a banking partner of Walter A. Wyman, president of the Central Maine Power Company and Insull's chief lieutenant in all New England. Needless to say, Gannett's newspapers worked strenuously for the abolition of the primary.

The primary was saved mainly because of the efforts of Dr. Gruening's *Evening News* and of Brewster and Baxter. These two men stumped the State to save the primary. And the end is not yet. Both have aspirations for the United States Senate. Both view Mr. Insull with alarm and the feeling is probably mutual.

> They seek [says Baxter] to use our natural resources as a link in the great chain they are forging to control the electric industry from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, from the Canada line to the Ohio River. The methods used by the Insull interests have been disclosed in the United States Senatorial primary in Illinois, in which, according to the newspapers, Mr. Insull admitted having expended upwards of $125,000 to nominate his favorite.

Out of it all Maine people may get cheaper electricity. Undeveloped resources in the State represent about two-thirds of the undeveloped water-power in all New England. Maine people are beginning to wonder why this wealth of water-power has not resulted in lower costs for electricity. They are beginning to wonder why, if the Insull interests are willing to transmit Maine power to Massachusetts with all the expense that involves, they are not able to sell the power far more cheaply in Maine.

With electricity a looming issue in the coming Congress, the upheaval in Maine is one of the most important phenomena in the land. For one member of Congress it is especially important. It has reopened the embarrassing question of just how Senator Arthur R. Gould managed to get there.

In the Driftway

TAMMANY Hall on Fourteenth Street has been sold, and the sachems of the metropolis are to hold their powwows in a new meeting-place the location of which, at this writing, is not known to the Drifter. The old Wigwam which for sixty years has been the center of New York's political life—whose walls keep the secrets of Tweed, Croker, Murphy, and lesser bosses—is to be torn down or made over into a business building.

* * * * *

THE abandonment of Tammany Hall about completes the dismantling of what was once one of the smartest and most important streets in New York. Tammany Hall's near neighbor, the Academy of Music—full of historic associations—was recently sold for business and the old Van Buren house, farther west, has suffered a similar fate. A few stores of substantial reputation still remain on the thoroughfare, but they are lost among dingy buildings housing even dingier business. Garish lights in shop windows call attention to displays of cheap gewgaws inside, but the life fled from the street years ago.

* * * * *

THE Drifter has no space to recall here the history of Tammany Hall or of Fourteenth Street, to write of the dead glories of Koster and Bial's or Tony Pastor's amusement halls, to remind his readers of what Union Square used to be. It is enough to note that the former editorial offices of the Century Company, on the north side of the square, are now lost among the foreign-name signs of the wholesale textile trade, while the old Tiffany building on the west—once the glittering mecca of the wealthiest Christmas shoppers—is the home of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. When the Drifter first knew Fourteenth Street, more than twenty years ago, it was the southern outpost of the department-store trade by day and of the Tenderloin by night. Department stores lined Sixth Avenue from Fourteenth to Twenty-third Street in an almost unbroken phalanx of sober dignity. Crowds jammed the sidewalks all day. At night another crowd paraded Fourteenth Street from Union Square to Third Avenue along a highway bright with lights and filled with strident music from a score of dance halls and saloons.

* * * * *

THE Drifter's own most vivid memory of Tammany Hall is of one Election Day night when he was sent there to cover the news by a New York newspaper for which he was working. The returns were slow and the Wigwam was dull. So the Drifter strolled across the street and was standing on the sidewalk in front of Tom Sharkey's then famous saloon. The crowd was dense and presently a bouncer for Sharkey's place told the Drifter, in scarcely polite tones, to move on. In even less polite tones the Drifter asked the bouncer if he owned the sidewalk. A strong right arm flashed out and a second later the Drifter rose from a heap in the street some ten feet away. He didn't approach that right arm again. Instead he sought a policeman and made a charge of assault. The policeman eyed the Drifter critically, and then: "I don't see no mark on yer face," said the majesty of the law. "I won't arrest nobody fer assault on a night like this without he leaves a mark on the other fella's face."

THE DRIFTER

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Correspondence

Al Smith

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Mr. Villard paints an interesting and attractive picture of a man for whom many will be glad to vote. But he says: "As for the prohibition issue, Governor Smith must tell the public exactly where he will stand if elected, whether . . . he will determinedly uphold the Eighteenth Amendment."

Has not his conduct already answered that question? Has he not advocated the repeal of the New York enforcement law? Had he not more to do with the repeal of these laws than any one else? If, as Governor of New York, he would nullify the United States Constitution, what would he do as President? By what sophistry can a Governor say "I will uphold the constitution of my State but not the Constitution of the United States; I will have repealed the laws of my State which help to uphold the Constitution of the nation, so that I will have no prohibition laws to enforce and my conscience will be clear; if ever I am a candidate for President I will assure the voters that I will enforce the laws, if elected"?

If the whole nation were as thirsty and as lawless as New York, Governor Smith might be elected President, but the West and Middle West do not want a "wet" President.

Columbus, Ohio, December 5 FRANK M. RAYMOND

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Mr. Villard's portrait of Al Smith, while true in most details is misleading in its total effect because of serious omissions and still more because of wrong proportions. Governor Smith is an able and attractive man who knows the business of New York State inside out. If progressivism means anything he is not entitled to progressive leadership. In two paragraphs near the end of his article Mr. Villard makes admissions which prove that fact and for the thoughtful reader quite counteract the panegyrics of the preceding pages. He is an extraordinary national progressive leader who has no national program, no real political philosophy, no fierce indignation at the election frauds of his own political organization, and no hostility toward or from Wall Street.

Moreover there are some important facts that Mr. Villard does not record. Governor Smith was pledged to the hilt to the ratification of the child-labor amendment. So was his party. Yet under pressure of the opinion of leaders of his own church and of the Protestant Democratic South he side-stepped the ratification issue by one of the neatest political maneuvers in recent times. Only recently he delighted the heart of the big bankers by coming out for the abolition of the federal inheritance tax in 1931.

Now look at State affairs. Governor Smith's celebrated housing program has so far been a complete failure for reasons which have little to do with the omission of the housing-bank feature to which Mr. Villard refers. While, especially in his earlier years, he has formally declared for many progressive measures he has fought only for his water-power law and for certain rather routine welfare measures. His water-power program is weak because it does not deal adequately with the distribution of power after it is generated. He has led no real fight on the injunction evil and his recommendations on that issue have been better calculated to catch labor votes than to get results. Mr. Villard quotes the Governor's rather ancient 1920 declaration for municipal operation of public utilities. In spite of that declaration the Governor is pretty generally regarded in investment circles as more friendly to the New York transit companies than Mayor Walker is at present. Some of his closest political friends, for example Lewis Nixon, whom he once made a public service commissioner, and Dr. Berry, the present comptroller of New York City, have opposed municipal operation of subways and the five-cent fares.

Now in spite of these facts one may be enthusiastic for Al Smith, but it will not be because he is a progressive. It is a sad commentary on the lack of faith among the alleged progressives that they are so willing to accept the Governor's record for administrative ability and his somewhat spotted liberalism as sufficient qualifications for a leader. The truth of the matter is that men love or hate Al Smith without much reference to his stand on economic matters because of the interest they feel in the three R's of present-day American politics—rum, race, and religion. On these issues I understand the support for Governor Smith and even feel some sympathy with it. But even if I were a progressive rather than a Socialist I do not believe I should forget my progressivism in my excitement about these three R's. Nor should I inconsistently give Governor Smith credit for all the "reformed" Tammany's dubious virtues while holding him innocent of all responsibility for the unpunished milk scandals, Jimmy Walker's very suspicious bus-franchise awards, the Queensborough sewer graft, the degradation of the city judiciary, and the frauds of the last election, as bad as the worst efforts in Philadelphia and Chicago.

New York, December 6 NORMAN THOMAS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Mr. Villard's incisive, objective study of Al Smith as a Presidential possibility is by far the ablest I have read.

But those of us who have followed Mr. Smith's public career from its inception as a member of the New York State Legislature in 1903 and have seen him approach and fearlessly solve the questions of social legislation, of tax reform, of administrative and bureaucratic changes, with an open, yea, even an unprepared mind, find in his lack of both training and views on the subject of foreign affairs one of the greatest assets he possesses as a Presidential possibility.

When we view the history of international affairs that led to the Great War and its unhappy sequels, we must reach the determination that what a public man, especially one in the office of President of the United States, needs most of all at the present time, in guiding him in dealing with other nations, is a total lack of predetermined opinion.

The type of training which has heretofore been most characteristic of statesmen, consisting primarily in a knowledge of diplomatic niceties, of international finance, and of hackneyed legal phraseology, Al Smith is better off for not possessing.

Al Smith, in his work on the factory commission and on the commission to inquire into the subject of widows' pensions, on which body I had the honor to serve with him, brought about greater social reforms through legislation than had been known in any State of the Union; in his labors as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1915 he grasped clearly the need for administrative reorganization of the government of our State; in his subsequent work as Governor of the State of New York he has been able to breathe the spirit of humanity into the interpretation of the financial statements of our State government; and he will unquestionably approach international affairs in the same human, progressive, and socially minded spirit that has characterized all his efforts of almost a quarter of a century.

Voltaire once aptly declared that "we care most for those portraits in which we find ourselves." It might be similarly said of Al Smith that we care most for him because in him we find the same lack of cant, of hypocrisy, and of an irrational adherence to the status quo that are characteristic of the plain peoples of the world, combined with that extraordinary common sense that has been the guiding light in all his deliberations.

The United States, which has come to be the strongest World Power, economically, that civilization has ever known, with a distaste for both militarism and imperialism, can well find leadership in its effort to humanize international relations, in the militant and virile, yet unfettered mentality of Al Smith.

New York, December 7 WILLIAM IRVING SIROVICH,
Member of Congress, Fourteenth Congressional District, New York

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Books, Art, Plays

Introduction

By CHARLES A. WAGNER

The hard limbs of the trees
Are rocking in a yellow hammock
Deeper than the summer sky.
Walk with me and talk with me.
You were a grain of space
Searching the rock of a brown continent.
Your limbs are made softer by a syrup of rebellion
Encircling your shining phrases and brittle words.
Walk with me and talk with me.
Tell me who you are and why our hands are warm
And how many times the stars have pulled at your dresses.
Born in fire we die in fire
And in between is fire also.

I am sun, sin, and song
And that is my name and address.
I weigh twenty centuries, and my height
Is a circle that goes up at my head
And returns to my feet through this park pavement.
Long ago I married two eyes and a mouth.
One eye was the sun, the other the moon,
And the mouth I married was the lightning
That slit the heavens into lavender ribbons
And blackened the earth with fear.
Walk with me and talk with me,
It can do no harm, and I can whisper
How beautiful you are.

First Glance

THE best thing said for Blake in this year of his centenary is said by himself in a complete edition of his prose and verse which can be dropped into an overcoat pocket. The Nonesuch Press has condensed its bulky and expensive "Blake," edited with exhaustive care by Geoffrey Keynes, into a single volume of 1,140 thin pages (Random House: $5)—and this by sacrificing none of the material. The variorum apparatus is gone, but all of Blake now known to exist is here. The curious reader has in a compact and graceful book the lyrical poems, the prophetic books, the "Descriptive Catalogue" and other documents relating to Blake's exhibits, the miscellaneous prose, the epigrams and fragments, the letters, and the marginal comments on Lavater, Swedenborg, Bacon, Berkeley, Wordsworth, and Reynolds. Few publications have been more needed or more welcome than this one which Mr. Keynes in his preface calls "a sufficient monument" to Blake as poet and philosopher. There is now a volume in Everyman's Library (Dutton: eighty cents) which contains almost all of Blake that the average reader would want. When this reader wants more he has Mr. Keynes to go to.

The pity is that the average reader has little or no chance to see Blake's texts as in many cases Blake intended them to be seen—as integral portions of engraved designs. His famous method of "illuminated printing" was to etch both text and design in relief on copper and to color the prints of each page by hand. The result was something which it is indeed no esotericism to define as indispensable to a knowledge of Blake. Blake definitely conceived his words as pictures, his pictures as words, and only one who has never seen an example of the illuminated books will deny their importance. Naturally the copies that have survived from Blake's own hand are few and widely scattered among the collectors of the world. But this year of the centenary has seen some attempts at fascimile. Earlier in the season the "Songs of Innocence" and the "Songs of Experience" were reproduced in a limited edition in England. And now come 300 copies to America of "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, reproduced in facsimile from an original copy of the work in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge," with a note by Max Plowman (Dutton: $10). It is a book not only to own and display but to read. For the passion of these satanic proverbs ("The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom;" "Prudence is a rich ugly old maid courted by incapacity;" "He who desires but acts not breeds pestilence") and the terrible annunciation of this poetry—

> Now the sneaking serpent walks
> In mild humility,
> And the just man rages in the wilds
> Where lions roam . . .

have thrice their old effect when come upon in pages illuminated by Blake's hand and by his glory-hunted brain. The only pity, as I have said, is that more than 300 Americans cannot see Mr. Plowman's edition.

MARK VAN DOREN

A Tale for Children

A History of the American Drama. From the Civil War to the Present Day. By Arthur Hobson Quinn. Two volumes. Harper and Brothers. $10.

HAVING published some time ago a one-volume history of our drama from its beginnings to the Civil War, Professor Quinn now completes the story with two volumes more. He is one of the ablest of the small group of scholars who have devoted themselves to the rather barren field of American dramatic literature, he has shown an indefatigable industry in rummaging for the manuscripts of unpublished plays, and by confining himself rather strictly to dramatic literature as distinguished from stage history he has managed to achieve a fairly complete account within reasonable limits. Here, in a word, is somewhat more than most people will care to know about the plays which have delighted audiences from the time of our fathers down to the present day; and the record is one, it must be confessed, which is vastly depressing.

Professor Quinn himself is gifted with that tolerant catholicity of taste which is doubtless necessary to sustain anyone who has made a heroic resolution to devote his life to a critical study of third-rate works of art; and he sees the history of the American drama in terms of a "progress." James A. Hearn marks an advance in realism; Clyde Fitch in delicacy of perception; William Vaughn Moody in depth of feeling. And so, in a sense, they do. But an advance, alas, over what? Over nothing except the incredible artificiality, obtuseness, and superficiality of their predecessors. It is only in comparison with midgets that they can be made to seem gigantic, and though they were great men in our theater they would have been great men nowhere else. The best of them is supremely unimportant when thought of in connection with any first-rate writer, and the sad fact remains that less intelligence, less sensitivity, and less sincerity of purpose have gone to the mak-

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ing of our native drama than have gone into any other American enterprise except the movies. With the exception of a few plays written within the last fifteen years there is not a single one of our dramatic "masterpieces" which does not seem painfully tawdry in comparison with any of a score of American novels or essays written during the nineteenth century, and there never was a time when a considerable proportion of the audience in any first-class theater was not intellectually superior to the fare it was offered—when, that is to say, it did not read books reflecting vastly maturer views of life than any it saw presented upon the stage.

In the Autobiography of a Play, a well-known essay by Bronson Howard, that skilful purveyor to the popular taste of his time described how one of his dramas was constructed. Professor Quinn quotes several pages from it, apparently with approval, and since Howard exposed with masterful clarity the methods of the stage carpenter he may be used here to show why most American drama has been contemptible. In the course of the essay Howard explains just why each event in his play was made to occur as it did, but one quotation will be sufficient to reveal his method.

> A play must be [he says] in one way or another "satisfactory" to the audience. . . . In England and America the death of a pure woman on the stage is not "satisfactory" except when the play rises to the dignity of tragedy. The death, in an ordinary play, of a woman who is not pure, as in the case of "Frou-Frou," is perfectly satisfactory, for the reason that it is inevitable. . . . The wife who has once taken the step from purity to impurity can never reinstate herself in the world of art on this side of the grave; and so an audience looks with complacent tears on the death of an erring woman. But Lillian had not taken the one fatal step which would have reconciled an audience to her death. She was still pure, and everyone left the theater wishing she had lived. I yielded therefore to the sound logic, based on sound dramatic principle, of my New York manager Mr. A. M. Palmer, and the piece was altered.

Now of course Howard was right so far as his elementary principle is concerned. Not only every play but every other work of art must be in some sense "satisfactory" to its audience and must be so not merely for the commercial reason that it will have no audience if it is not, but because the power of art to make things—even painful things—"satisfactory" is the power by which it constitutes itself art. But the things which are "satisfactory" to a mature intelligence are not the same as those which are "satisfactory" to a child. Conclusions other than that in which the prince and the princess live happily ever after become acceptable to us. We learn to perceive harmonies where an undeveloped sensitivity would find only discord; wisdom and experience teach us to perceive, for example, the patterns which irony can make and we grow up to tragedy. We become sick of hearing the same few major chords endlessly strummed and we ask that the artist shall perceive the infinite variety of life and that, as we grow more and more aware of its dissonances, he shall keep pace with our needs by more and more subtle resolutions into the harmony of art. Every great dramatist, like every great artist of any other kind, is consciously or unconsciously aware of this fact, and his effort is not so much to alter his material until it can be made to fit the already existing emotional patterns as it is to make new patterns by means of which his material can become "satisfactory."

Bronson Howard did not, of course, invent the method he described; he merely formulated the principles underlying the practice of the American dramatist, and thus unwillingly exposed the reason why neither he nor any of his fellows ever wrote a play which any critics of literature can respect. He boasted of his skill in perpetuating emotional cliches—"the wife who has once taken the step from purity to impurity can never reinstate herself in the world of art on this side of the grave"—when even the man in the street was already outgrowing them. According to his professed principles the art of playwriting is not the art of rendering life as we know it "satisfactory" but merely the art of constructing fables according to the principles of child-psychology. All through the nineteenth century the American dramatist was telling nursery tales to a people which was beginning to grow up in spite of its theater, and that is the reason there is no history of the American drama really worth the telling.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Horace Porter

An American Soldier and Diplomat: Horace Porter. By Elsie Porter Meade in Collaboration with Henry Greenleaf Pearson. Frederick A. Stokes Company. $5.

HORACE PORTER was one of the fine group of West Pointers, graduated just before the Civil War, to whom came honors and the playing of great roles while they were in their early twenties. Porter, a member of a distinguished Pennsylvania family, was seized upon for staff duty as soon as he was allowed to leave Watervliet Arsenal where he was on ordnance duty when hostilities began. Trained officers were scarce, and so Porter became chief of ordnance of McClellan's armies in July, 1862, when twenty-five years old. Later he served as aide to General Rosecrans and in 1864 to General Grant himself, whose favorite staff officer and most devoted friend he soon became. At Chickamauga, Porter had displayed the highest personal heroism in trying to rally the disorganized Union troops, which act was witnessed and reported by the Assistant Secretary of War, Charles A. Dana. With Grant he took part in all the terrible battles of the Wilderness in the complete confidence of his chief, and he was one of the fortunate group of officers who were with Grant in the McLean House at Appomattox when Lee surrendered his army to Grant—surely one of the greatest moments in American history. General Porter remained with General Grant as his aide even when he became President, and did not resign from the army until 1872, late enough to have shared some of the glories and some of the scandals of Grant's first Administration. Thereafter he went into business, becoming in 1896 the first American ambassador to France where he served with distinction for eight years, doing useful service for the Administration in favorably influencing the French government during the most needless of wars—our struggle with Spain in 1898.

All of this story is remarkably well told by the joint authors of this volume—especially the Civil War episodes, which are often vividly and movingly portrayed. Mrs. Meade has kept well within bounds her justifiable admiration of her father, and Professor Pearson has added the scholarly touch to be expected of one of his experience in biographical writing. To him, we presume, goes also the credit for the valuable notes and index. Notably well done is the touching picture of General Grant in his last days as seen through the eyes of a young girl, the bowed and broken and bankrupt ex-President, stricken by the fatal malady, yet pushing his pencil over pad after pad to write those admirable memoirs which went so far to rehabilitate the family fortune or at least to pay off debts. In those days General Porter was his old chief's staunchest friend and helped, with General Badeau, in collecting the material for Grant's narrative.

Horace Porter was a handsome man of superb carriage, a public speaker of great ability who concealed under a somewhat austere presence, humor, affability, and shrewd observation. Politically he was wedded to the Republican Party and through his business affiliations to the type of government represented by McKinley and Hanna. On the subject of war and peace he blew hot and cold. A delegate to the Hague Conference in 1899, he raged at the idiocies of the professional diplomats and said: "If some of those fellows at the Hague had been through four years of battles like the Wilderness and Cold Harbor they'd be mighty anxious to stop war at any cost."

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Yet he was inconsistent enough himself—and admitted the inconsistency—to be both president of the belligerent militaristic Navy League and a vice-president of the Andrew Carnegie Peace Society. When the World War came on he completely forgot his great leader's "Let us have peace," which he had had chiseled on Grant's tomb (for the completion of which General Porter deserved all the credit), and threw himself into the preparedness campaign, believing in those greatest of delusions that armaments ward off war and that war can cure war.

Nevertheless General Porter was a striking type of his class and period. This biography thoroughly deserves its place with those of the other leaders of the armies of the republic.

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Without Benefit of Rotary

The Promised Land. Translated from the Polish of Ladislas Reymont by M. H. Dziewicki. Alfred A. Knopf. Two volumes. $5.

LODZ, the Manchester of Poland, is the setting of Reymont's newly translated novel. The setting is interesting enough. By X-raying the factual outlines of it hidden under heavy layers of paint in Reymont's overcolored work, and by duly discounting the author's naively unconscious racial prepossessions, one can reconstruct for oneself a laissez-faire society beside which its nineteenth-century English original seems like a Home for the Aged. There is no doubt left but that the Lodz of that period was sadly in need of Rotary and the Application of the Golden Rule to Business. But such a reading of the book would be in the nature of research. Purely as fiction the work is tedious when not outright laughable. Imagine Elinor Glyn and Michael Gold in collaboration—the former doing the love scenes, the latter writing up the factories. The former providing such passages as:

> "Oh, how I have dreamed of this moment! For how many months have I longed for you! For how many years have I waited—waited in sorrow! Oh, kiss me—kiss me with all your might and main!—Ah," she cried wildly, "I'd willingly die this very instant!"

The latter providing the emotions of a foreman on beholding the remains of a worker that was crushed to a pulp in the machinery:

> He, seeing the workers idle and crowding around the remains, cried out from the doorway: "Back to the machines. . . . Confound it! So much good stuff spoiled!" The foreman cursed at the sight of the percale goods spotted with gore.

With equally bold strokes does he draw his chief protagonists, the Jews, Poles, and Germans who form the industrial aristocracy of the mill town—particularly the Jews and the Poles. Not that the author is intentionally anti-semitic. But he accepts it as one accepts a law of nature that Jews are unconscionable knaves—mean, cowardly, avaricious, and generally incapable of any other pursuit in life than that of amassing wealth; whereas the Poles are hopelessly honest, noble-minded, generous, and incurable idealists. Daringly and iconoclastically the author tries to break through these axiomatic limitations in an effort to achieve psychological originality for his characters, but his efforts are foredoomed to failure. He makes of his Polish hero, Charles Boroviecki, a ruthless careerist, a close rival to his treacherous Jewish partner in his villainy, letting neither love nor honor stand in his way of achieving a fortune. One who deserts the high-born Polish sweetheart of his youth, embezzles her dowry, and finally marries the daughter of a boorish German mill-owner for her millions. One who, when confronted by the frantic husband of the beautiful Jewess with whom he is carrying on an amour, swears without compunction on the sacred image of the Virgin of Chenstohova that the child she is bearing is not his. But somehow his avarice and his duplicity do not ring true. Because all the time we know he is a Pole, and of course incapable of such things. We suspend judgment; and sure enough, after he has acquired his millions he repents and signifies his intention of building a Home for Workers' Children. On the other hand, the only Jewish character in the novel who succeeds in developing a soul is flatly accused of being Polish by her mercenary Jewish suitor.

"The Promised Land" is an early work and it may be unfair to judge the author of "The Peasants" by it. It seems to me, however, that its weaknesses are not mere immaturities, but Reymont's intrinsic limitations. Neither in this work nor in the work which won him the Nobel Prize is there exhibited any feeling for psychologic contour. He wrote when Poland was politically still a part of Russia, but if he is representative of Polish literature, it would seem that Poland had little to do with Russia artistically. Unlike his fellow-Slavs, whose characters spring full-grown on the first page so that the reader knows them intimately long before he learns to pronounce their names, Reymont lets his people remain for hundreds of pages mere bizarre typographic arrangements. If he has any affinity with a Russian, it is with the painter Verestchagin, with his vast landscapes peopled with dramatic tableaux. On the huge outdoor canvas on which "The Peasants" is painted, individuals merge naturally and inconspicuously into the landscape. "The Peasants" was an epic of the soil in which Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer were the principal characters; there Reymont's descriptive power showed to advantage. In the urban background of "The Promised Land," where the landscape is psychological, he is at his worst.

ALTER BRODY

Three Poets

The Pale Woman. By Sara Bard Field. William Edwin Rudge. $4.

The Evergreen Tree. By Kathleen Millay. Boni & Liveright. $2.

Happy Ending. By Louise Imogen Guiney. Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

THE minor poets in a great phalanx swing valiantly along the highway, each chanting his own justification. Actually the column hardly moves; it is only the few leaders and the laggards who give the illusion of motion. The leaders stand out here as individuals, but the main massed body must be followed as a whole. Its variations merge and almost disappear, as they do in a line of uniformed soldiers who are differentiated by the sunshine on a helmet, the twitching of a muscle, or the dust on a pack. The minor poets have their many variations also: here a man whose song is dulcet, here a man of strident plaints, here one with a thundering basso, there a timid voice with sweet drowned notes in it. We listen; but we listen to the chorus more than to the single voices. The burdens of their music are those eternal verities that never cease to move the human heart: love joined, love sundered, death, fortitude, peace, or the color of a violet, the spell of the moon. But these are themes that have been encompassed by the mighty poets; the lesser writer of verse can clasp only a fragment of the whole. It is not that the great masters have said all that can ever be uttered, but that they have left a fusion of truth and form as a tall measuring rod against which each new poetic utterance must stand.

So that, when one differentiates among the minor poets, it is again the sun on a helmet or flecks of dust that are seen. Sara Bard Field writes fastidiously, has produced a volume of feminine, sensitive, trite verse. There is about her a coiled bitterness that never unwinds and fully shows itself, a fine thinness and yearning. Her words are incisive whether in a poem like Crescendo, an appealing series of lyrics, or in as brief and simple a quatrain as Load:

> She is big with child again
> Though never her body so arrow-slim.
> The dead are not carried in sight of men!
> Heavy grows her heart with him.

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"The Evergreen Tree," by Kathleen Millay, is a collection of swift-singing, facile, almost epigrammatic stanzas. Music and sincerity are in these lines, but they are too easily articulate and of too lilting a rhythm to avoid glibness. In contrast, the reprint of "Happy Ending" reveals richly the maturity and mellowness and passion of Miss Guiney's work. Here are the intricacy and glow of old tapestry, concrete images compact with beauty, a variety of form, a vitality of spirit.

> Within a smallest span,
> In fury, to and fro and round and round,
> The routed leopards of the lightning ran.

Such lines are worth keeping. Out of the featureless ranks of the minor poets Miss Guiney has emerged with a shining loveliness and a fragile strength.

LENORE G. MARSHALL

Fiction in the Flat

A Victim of Circumstances. By George Gissing. Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

CHEKHOV and a few other short-story writers have realized that fiction may distort reality when too great stress is placed upon those moments which men have naively believed are most significant. When people make money, or marry, or divorce, or buy a ticket to Europe, nothing—for the purpose of essential characterization—may be happening. On the other hand, a man trying to read a newspaper in the train might offer to the story-teller a moment which if actually revealed would be valuable indeed for fiction; for such a moment might be much richer in tension, stress, drama, than one more active or more spectacular. George Gissing understood this. And this is the outstanding virtue of the present new collection.

It is Gissing's usual defect that he fails to infuse his well-chosen moments with the passion that seems so obviously inherent in them; fails to make them yield their own vivid story. If D. H. Lawrence were using some of the situations in these stories (as he might) the people would really love and fight and evade; would live to an emotional limit either for adjustment or for tragedy.

Four stories recall Mr. Lawrence. In The Schoolmaster's Vision the quiet pedant's flare-up when he sees the beautiful woman would with Lawrence be a conflagration, as one feels the author meant it to be. The final crystallization of hypocritical pedantry Gissing does exceedingly well; he writes best always of frustrated people. In The Honeymoon there would be the bitterness of the struggle between the egos of husband and wife; the momentary surrender to sex, and the recurring antagonisms. There would be Lawrence's "blood rhythm," which is probably a good image for suggesting the rhythm of life. Any such implication is lost in Gissing. In Lou and Liz, these two loyal Londoners (both unlicensed mothers) have abundant vitality; and Gissing has presented them with more than his usual degree of spirit, insight, even humor. Yet there is still something lacking of convincing reality. Lou and Liz remain shadowy. One remembers Lawrence's Tickets Please, and knows how much Gissing misses of his characters' possibilities. And, finally, Fleet Footed Hester is so much more Lawrence's sort of thing than Gissing's. The story tells of Hester's refusal of the man she really desires; of her race in the early morning across London to hold her man at Waterloo Station. The deep motivations (which one feels Gissing hoped to achieve) are lost sight of in the race itself.

Comparisons are often neither pertinent nor fair. They are offered here to sustain the charge that Gissing works in gray, flat, quiet tones. Just how gray and how quiet is clear by comparison with Lawrence. Yet these stories show Gissing as a writer who knew what to choose for fiction even if he lacked the courage or the power to be in his fiction as passionate as his characters give him the chance to be.

ANGUS BURRELL

Books in Brief

Journal of Katherine Mansfield. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.50.

As a record of tragic suffering and frustration this journal makes almost unendurable reading; the sensation of encroaching on the privacy of a too sensitive soul is constant and embarrassing. It is only when one forgets Katherine Mansfield's heartrending fate and her bitter recriminations and concentrates on the many fascinating revelations she makes of the artist's temper and the artist's method that one secures from this book anything more than the simple emotions of sorrow and sympathy.

Patriots off Their Pedestals. By Paul Wilstach. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.75.

This supposedly jolly tome attempts to recount every guffaw, snort, and snore that eight of the best-known revolutionary worthies ever let loose. It is based upon the engaging theory that there "actually was a lot of fun in the dear old boys," who, we are informed, are much more inspiring when shown with wrinkled pants than with wrinkled brows. Each depedestaled "old boy" furnishes the material for a fairly strong concoction—the several chapters might well serve as a substitute for home brews—but the book won't do at all for those who like to take their heroes straight.

Carlyle at His Zenith (1848-1853). By David Alec Wilson. E. P. Dutton and Company. $5.

The fourth volume of Mr. Wilson's biography covers the period of "Latter-Day Pamphlets," "The Life of John Sterling," and the beginnings of "Frederick the Great." Carlyle is at the height of his powers, but feeling premonitions of age. His fame has attracted a multitude of observers friendly and hostile, with the result that we know him more intimately than in the preceding volumes. Especially clear are the heterodoxy of his private religious views, and the essential democracy of the manners and attitudes of this contemner of republicanism. Mr. Wilson is a self-effacing biographer, supplying just sufficient historical background to make intelligible the parodoxes of Carlyle's opinions and actions.

Art

Jacob Epstein

"ART should be straightforward," Epstein said one day. "Even if it is clumsy—that does not matter so much. The worst thing of all is to be slick!"

Most of his models have been women, whom he represents with direct and intimate realism. There is nothing slick about those strongly modeled heads. Andrea, Oriel, Meum, Dolores, Zeda, Miriam, Amina—their names read like some pre-Raphaelite choir of the blessed, though doubtless not many of them would aspire to such pious fellowship. Epstein has transformed them into hard-bitten bronze, whose color and texture vary according to the nature of the portrait. The Mask of Meum, with its subtly curving mouth and eyelids, its slender, decadent purity of line, is in a pale metal, half brassy and half golden. The flowing mold of Andrea—"a model that Ingres would have loved"—shows the brown of old apple-wood, warmly colored as if by centuries. Epstein is interested in these women not as decorative figures, but as expressions in form of mood and character.

Thus he avoids the expected nude, preferring to concentrate upon a head. Even where the figure rises from the waist, as in Zeda or Dolores with ear-rings, the head emerges with an effect of massive climax, weighted like life and charged with personality. The hair falls heavily, or swirls back violently from the face: it is only slightly conventionalized. The eyes are frankly expressive, an unusual thing in sculpture. Due partly

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to the treatment of muscles and eyelids, partly to their setting, partly to the deeply cut-in iris, the eyes become a focal point in Epstein's bronzes, just as they do in the human face. The skin is a broken surface, vibrating to the light. The curve of a nostril or the twist of a mouth is accentuated, according as it brings out an essential trait. The asymmetry of human features, a fact ignored in Grecian sculpture, is emphasized by Epstein. His favorite plane is the diagonal one, as in the Gothic arch or the flame-like upward leap of an El Greco painting.

Usually he works slowly and deliberately, always with careful reference to anatomy and the balance of masses. Formerly he even measured out dimensions with compasses and ruler, but now he says with a smile: "I trust my eye." He studies his models closely, sometimes over a period of years, making from them repeated experiments in form. Several of his most appealing pieces have been done from members of his own family: Peggy-Jean Laughing and Peggy-Jean Asleep; the Mask of Mrs. Epstein or the Head of Mrs. Epstein, with tiers of veiling dropping like stalactites around the downcast face. With professional models he goes to great pains to secure the ones who interest him and to keep them at hand until he has plumbed their values. A striking instance of that was the Hindu beauty, Amina, and her son, Enver—the kingly little boy of the hooked nose and the Byzantine forehead and eyes. During more than a year Epstein made various portraits of them both, and it was their presence in the studio which gradually suggested the conception for his lovely Madonna and Child.

This group was shown for the first time at the Ferargil Galleries, the only monument among a collection of Titanic heads. It is a piece apt to rouse the churchly to wrath or to bewilderment, combining as it does the Earth Mother with the Virgin. The knees flexed and far apart, the immense breadth of hips and shoulders, the sensual richness of the folded draperies give a sense of something full and primitive, something far removed from any immaculate conception. It is what Epstein calls a "frontal" work, a mask-like monument made to occupy a niche, and the primitive idea is reinforced by a definite relation to primitive forms in art. The base is wide and elaborately stylized, working upward in triangle form, with a growing agitation in the draperies, to the deeply human heads. According to the artist, it was the relation of these two heads that formed the starting-point for the whole complex composition. They are set exactly on a diagonal, a line that is continued in the arm of the Christ-child, outstretched like a narrow branch. It is a composition remarkable for volume and depth, for design and feeling exactly harmonized. Persons who complain of a restlessness pervading much of Epstein's work will find here a satisfying quiet, the sweetness born of strength. This is religious art, in the profoundest and tenderest sense. It conveys an emotion kindred to that in the almost forgotten lines of Hopkins:

> Because the Holy Ghost over the bent world
> Broods with warm breast, and with ah! bright wings.

Childhood and maternity are subjects that interest Epstein greatly. His male heads, in very dark bronze, are successful for their massive form, their variety of surface, their psychological honesty and acuteness. But the feminine heads, apart from any more obvious attraction, correspond, I believe, to the emotional strain in Epstein and to a certain feminine sweetness in his own nature—*das ewig Weibliche* in the sense that Goethe intended it. For many people the emotional quality of Epstein is too pronounced, just as it seemed a generation ago in Cézanne and Van Gogh. It is an even more daring thing in sculpture than it was in painting, with the example of the Greeks perpetually before us. It is, in largest measure, the "controversial" element in Epstein's work, and it has been present in him from the beginning.

It may be seen in the drawings made by a boy of twenty on Hester Street, to illustrate a volume of Hutchins Hapgood called "The Spirit of the Ghetto." It must have existed in the student working almost without instruction at Julien's in Paris. It persists in the man of forty-five who, without masters or disciples, has evolved through vorticism and abstraction, through distortion and simplification to a sure technique of his own. In one or two of his present-day works, like the Weeping Woman or the slightly overdecorated Eva, the effect of transfixed emotion just escapes being grotesque. And yet, whatever the theorists may say about "self-contained art" or "abstract form" the bronzes by Epstein—usually built a little over life-size—have an intense vitality that by contrast makes living flesh seem faint and dead.

ROSE LEE

H. L. MENCKEN *says:*—

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Drama

Poet Laureate

AT least since the days of J. M. Synge and his "Playboy" the rising Irish dramatist has been expected to prove his worth by demonstrating his ability to provoke a riot. The theatergoers of Dublin are a patriotic lot and they like to applaud any ringing rhetorical tribute to the beauty of old Ireland; but as everybody knows patriotism can never be fully expressed except in a fight, and the Irish playwright who really wishes to endear himself to his people will not fail to give occasion for that exhilarating exercise. If one of his first nights is signalized by vigorous boos and a reasonable number of bloody threats we may confidently speak of his "promise," but if the missiles actually fly and a few broken heads are the fruit of the evening then the lucky author is a made man. Italy crowns her poets with laurel, Ireland with brick-bats.

Sean O'Casey, once a member of the Citizens' Army and now the brightest particular star in the dramatic firmament of the North, rose to fame in the usual way. The first two of his plays to attract attention—"The Shadow of a Gunman" and "Juno and the Paycock"—were the occasion of no more than somewhat heated discussion but "The Plow and the Stars" (February, 1926) had a real Irish success. When the third act began twenty women rushed from the pit to the stalls and two of them succeeded in reaching the stage, where a general melee took place. The curtain was lowered, an infuriated group tried to pull it down, and when it was raised again a youth dashed to the stage and got into grips with the actresses who were beginning the scene. Two actors, rushing to the aid of their fellow-thespians, pushed him off, but by this time another had mounted and was only disposed of after he had been hurled to the stalls by a punch in the jaw. Pandemonium, not quieted until the arrival of the police reserves, then broke loose and it was not until a considerable portion of the audience had been got out of the theater that the play was allowed to proceed. Under the circumstances who could doubt that the fanatic interregnum which had lasted since the death of Synge and the desuetude of Yeats and Lady Gregory had come to an end, and that O'Casey was king? From the stage Yeats himself announced to the howling mob: "You have once more rocked the cradle of a reputation. The fame of O'Casey is born tonight. This is apotheosis."

Last season we in America had an opportunity to see "Juno and the Paycock," and this season the Irish Players themselves have brought "The Plow and the Stars" to the Hudson Theater. No riots have occurred, but that is not my chief reason for believing that the genius of this author has been somewhat overestimated. As a critic I am compelled to apply other criteria of excellence, and even if the theater had been completely demolished by his happy compatriots I should not have considered even that enthusiasm wholly convincing. No one can deny that O'Casey has an extraordinary gift for racy dialogue or that he can hit off the foibles of Irish character with malicious wit, but his plays lack form, lack movement, and in the last analysis lack any informing purpose. They bustle with characters, generally amusing enough in themselves, but the series of sketches which go to make up one of his dramas is strung upon the skimpiest thread of melodramatic action, and though each of his plays has its moments neither of the two seen here produces any unified or lasting effect. To this day I do not know just where the author's sympathies lie, and I defy anyone, after six months have passed, to recall the play in any form except that embodied in a jumbled memory of rather confused events. Each has a little drinking, a little fighting, and a few tragic deaths; but that is about all that can be said. Even to an outsider it is evident that O'Casey has to a remarkable degree the national gift for picking quarrels with his neighbors and that he hands out insults right and left to all parties with a fine impartiality. But that gift by itself does not—outside Ireland—constitute a man a great dramatist, and when I see one of his plays I have the uncomfortable feeling of being in on a row which does not really concern me. The real fun must lie in taking a side in order to crack someone who takes the other over the head, but I haven't the slightest idea which side to take.

In "Fallen Angels" (Forty-ninth Street Theater) Noel Coward tells a slight tale of two respectable married women who are put all in a flutter by the threatened reappearance of an ex-lover. It has its moments. Don Marquis's "Out of the Sea" (Eltinge Theater) has also its moments, but it is too determinedly poetic ever to rise to poetry. "The Centuries" (Cherry Lane Theater) and "2 × 2 = 5" (Civic Repertory Theater) are "experimental" dramas. The first, by Em Jo Basshe, is a chaos from which I could extract nothing; the second a fairly amusing but rather pointless satire translated from the Danish. The sets by B. Aronson, who is now holding an exhibit at the Anderson Galleries, are its most interesting feature. Margaret Anglin in repeating the "Electra" of Sophocles at the Gallo Theater continues a great play with a very uneven company. The high moment is high and terrible indeed, but much of the rest is tamer than it should be.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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International Relations Section

Vilna and the League

By MATILDA SPENCE

AFTER four years of frustrated efforts the small republic of Lithuania has at last succeeded in getting a hearing before the Council of the League of Nations on the subject of her lost capital of Vilna. Apparently there will be many rounds before a final decision can be given.

It will be recalled that ever since the Conference of Ambassadors assigned Vilna to Poland by their decision of March, 1923—a decision bitterly protested by Lithuania—the Kovno Government has consistently refused all diplomatic relations with Poland, has kept the entire Polish-Lithuanian frontier closed, and considers a "state of war" to exist between the two countries.

In the last year or two there have been apparent efforts on the part of the Polish Government to create an impression that the Lithuanian Government was coming to see the folly of its way and that amical relations were imminent. That this point of view is not shared by Lithuanians may readily be concluded from following the Lithuanian press here and abroad. On October 9 of this year, Lithuania's official day of mourning for what she considers her lost capital of Vilna, although seven years have passed since that October 9 upon which General Zeligovski at the head of Polish troops seized that city, greater demonstrations than ever before took place throughout the entire country. All schools and shops were closed, flags were at half-mast, and meetings of protest were held everywhere. In many American cities Lithuanian papers on that day appeared heavily bordered in black.

To understand what Vilna, or Vilnius as the Lithuanians call that city, means to the Lithuanian people, it is necessary to turn back the pages of history to that time in the fourteenth century when, under the leadership of a long line of gifted warrior princes, the grand duchy of Lithuania had become a vast empire extending from the Baltic Sea nearly to the Black Sea with Vilnius as its capital.

In 1386 when the Lithuanian prince, Jagiellό, married the young Polish queen, Jadwiga, the hitherto pagan Lithuanians adopted the Christian religion and it was in Vilnius according to their historians that over 30,000 were baptized. Later under Lithuanian rule were laid the foundations for the great cathedral of Vilna which today is one of the architectural treasures of that part of Europe. All that is essentially and uniquely Lithuanian—their arts, their religion, their culture, and the memories of their days of independence and supremacy—are for Lithuanians forever enshrined in the beautiful city of Vilna.

In the 1880's when began that spirit of national or racial awakening, later designated by the phrase "self-determination," it was in Vilna that Lithuanians secretly gathered and by word of mouth, in spite of the then crushing Russian rule, kept alive tales of their grand dukes and the then forbidden Lithuanian language, an entirely non-Slavic tongue closely akin to the ancient Sanskrit of their Aryan forefathers.

Then came the war, and when in 1918 the German military power broke it was in Vilna in February of that year that the Lithuanian National Council proclaimed the Republic of Lithuania and for the first time in over five centuries established an independent Lithuanian state.

The Lithuanian National Government in Vilna after nine months in power was driven out by the Bolshevik forces. The Government retired to Kaunas (Kovno), a fortified city further up the Niemen River. An effort was made to organize a Lithuanian army to drive the Bolshevik forces out, but the Poles reached Vilna first and occupied the city in April, 1919.

In July, 1920, Lithuania concluded a peace treaty with Soviet Russia (Treaty of Moscow) in which the Vilna territory was recognized as an integral part of Lithuania. Poland, however, retained possession of Vilna. In August the tide turned and Poland, then engaged in warfare with the Bolshevik army, was forced to evacuate Vilna, and the Lithuanians on the strength of their treaty with Russia again established their government in their former capital. Later in the same year the Poles, in a new attack against the Bolsheviki, came into territory occupied by the Lithuanian troops, and grave danger of hostilities arose.

It is at this point in the long story of Vilna that the League of Nations first appears. On September 5 the Polish Chargé d'Affaires telegraphed the League asking its intervention to stop bloodshed. Three days later the Lithuanian Chargé d'Affaires in London also asked that the matter be placed before the League. On September 8, 1920, the Polish-Lithuanian dispute was officially placed on the agenda of the Council's meeting.

The League at once appointed a commission of military control to establish a line of demarcation between the Polish and Lithuanian forces. Negotiations to this end began on September 30 and continued until October 7 when an agreement was signed by representatives of both governments (the famous Suwalki Treaty) by which both sides agreed to accept the "Curzon line" as a provisional line of demarcation and to continue it in an easterly direction, leaving Vilna and its surrounding territory to Lithuania.

Two days after Poland's signature of this Suwalki Treaty, when everything seemed propitious for an early settlement, the whole situation was completely altered by the action of the Polish General Zeligovski who at the head of Polish troops seized the city of Vilna and proclaimed a "government of Central Lithuania."

Lithuania immediately protested this violation of the Suwalki Treaty and called upon the League to intervene. The Polish delegate before a meeting of the Council in Brussels in the same month officially repudiated General Zeligovski's act, declaring that he had acted as a rebel without sanction of the Polish Government. These assertions were not accepted either by the Lithuanians or by the League of Nations. Both claimed to have conclusive proof that General Zeligovski acted in connivance with the Polish Government, from which they allege he received supplies of munitions, food, and further contingents of troops. In spite of this no steps of coercion were taken by the Council, which did nothing more than send a strong note of disapproval condemning Zeligovski's illegal act.

This failure of the League to exact respect for its authority from one of its members—Poland—was in the opinion of many close to the situation at the time the cause of all its subsequent inability to solve the dispute.

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An attempt made by the Council to hold a plebiscite in the Vilna territory had to be abandoned because of the impossibility of holding an impartial vote in a district under military occupation. Lithuanians assert also that a wholesale importation of Poles was begun and that Lithuanians were forcibly driven out.

Direct negotiations were then opened before a League committee meeting in Brussels under the presidency of Mr. Hymans. After weeks of futile discussions with no satisfactory agreement Mr. Hymans drew up, to be used as a basis of further negotiations, his preliminary draft scheme, the vital part of which was the incorporation of the Vilna district in a proposed Lithuanian federal state. Thus in the second important act of the League in this dispute, as in the first—the Suwalki Treaty—the Vilna territory was definitely recognized as Lithuanian.

The Lithuanian Government immediately agreed to accept this draft scheme provided it be also accepted by the Poles. They, however, predicated their acceptance on a request that the population of Vilna be represented on a footing of equality in all further negotiations. Throughout the remainder of the Council's attempts to solve the dispute, Poland insisted on the granting of a decisive voice to representatives of Vilna. This created the impasse beyond which neither side would go. Lithuanians pointed out that no impartial representation could be obtained from a district under military occupation and demanded the withdrawal of the Zeligovski forces. The Poles with equal persistence refused to withdraw Zeligovski and held out for Vilna representation. No compromise could be reached. In January, 1922, at the Council meeting in Paris, the president announced his decision to withdraw the Commission of Military Control. He advised the establishment of a provisional line between the two neutral zones set up by the commission.

News of this contemplated withdrawal of the military commission came as a blow to Lithuanians who at this time were much concerned by rumors that Poland intended holding elections in the Vilna territory now for almost two years under Polish occupation. They saw in this an effort to legalize the status of General Zeligovski. The Lithuanian delegate speaking before the Council, in anticipation of the imminent withdrawal of the military commission, asked for the appointment of a high commissioner from a neutral country to act as intermediary. He further requested the Council to refer the dispute to the Council of Ambassadors which, as he pointed out, was empowered by the Treaty of Versailles to determine the eastern frontier of Poland and therefore had authority to act in the present impasse between Lithuania and Poland, "taking into account the engagement of that state toward the Lithuanian state and the vital interests of Lithuania." He stated that the Lithuanian Government would willingly intrust the solution of the dispute to the Court of International Relations.

All of these requests were refused. At this time came word from Poland that the Diet of Warsaw had voted to annex Vilna. On February 10, 1923, over the protest of Lithuania acting as a member of the League of Nations, the Council adopted a resolution laying down the so-called provisional line of demarcation by which the city and territory of Vilna remained on the Polish side, thus virtually approving the Zeligovski occupation of Vilna.

This act of the Council was bitterly criticized by Lithuanians, primarily on legal grounds. They officially refused to accept it and asked that the competence of the Council to take such arbitrary action be referred to the Permanent Court of International Justice for an opinion. In vain.

In Paris on March 15 the Council of Ambassadors formally recognized as the Russian-Polish frontier that fixed by the Treaty of Riga—the peace treaty of 1920 between Poland and Soviet Russia. At the same time it recognized as a boundary between Lithuania and Poland that same line of demarcation established by the Council on February 10, 1923, which had been strongly protested by Lithuania—a line by which the city and territory of Vilna were included in Polish frontiers. This decision, which was widely heralded as a diplomatic triumph for Poland, caused the deepest resentment throughout Lithuania. On April 20, 1923, the Government addressed a note to M. Poincaré as president of the Council of Ambassadors refusing to recognize its validity. Two main points were made: first, that the Council of Ambassadors had overstepped the authority given it under the Treaty of Versailles by which its jurisdiction was only absolute in the case of former enemy territory. The Vilna territory had formed a part of the former Russian Empire and by the Treaty of Moscow of 1920 had been formally ceded to Lithuania by Russia. The Council had no right to dispose of such territory without consultation with and ratification by both parties concerned.

Second, it was pointed out that the Council of Ambassadors in making its decision referred to the fact that Lithuania had voluntarily submitted the Vilna dispute to it for settlement but omitted entirely to mention that in the Lithuanian request the Council had been asked to employ those powers given it under Article 87 of the Versailles Treaty to fix the eastern frontier of Poland, "taking into account the engagement of that state toward the Lithuanian state and the vital interests of Lithuania." The decision of the Council completely ignores the existence of the Suwalki Treaty signed under the auspices of the League of Nations.

Four years have elapsed since Lithuania lodged these protests but in that time the Government has never deviated from its course. Today, as it was four years ago, the entire Lithuanian-Polish frontier is closed and under guard; no diplomatic or consular relations exist. Seven years have served to increase rather than diminish the determination of the Lithuanian people never to relinquish their claim to their ancient capital.

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